

# Salvation BY GRACE.

And Never the Less of  
GRACE,  
Tho it be through  
FAITH

And not without it.

In several Sermons on *EPH. II. viii.*

By *John Sheffield.*

*Rom. 4. 16. Therefore it is of Faith,  
that it might be by Grace.*

LONDON:

Printed by *S. Bridge*, for *Tho. Parkhurst* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapside* near *Mercer's-Chapel*, MDCXCVIII.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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To my Beloved Friends  
the Members and  
Auditors of my Con-  
gregation.

Dearly Beloved,

**T**Hese Discourses when first  
meditated, were designed  
chiefly for your Instruction  
and Edification in Faith and Holi-  
ness; and was never intended to be  
made more Publick, than the Audito-  
ry to whom they were Preached; but  
many of those that heard them, having  
oft expressed their Desires that they  
might be Published, hoping that them-  
selves should reap further, if not more  
Benefit by a deliberate Reading, than  
the bare transient Hearing of them.

## To the Reader.

And withal, hoping that what they had found beneficial to themselves might be so to others; and when after some considerable Delay some did continue to enquire when they might expect it; these Things did at length prevail with me, to consent to the Publishing of them; though not without some Reluctancy: Both because I judged the work it self not fit for Publick view, especially in a Time when we are so full of good Books, and many more excellent ones than this can be supposed to be, lye by neglected. And also, because I have been much pleased with that common saying, Bene vixit qui bene latuit; and the Advice that a Grave and Pious Person when Dying, gave to his near Relation, that he would endeavour to pass through the World without making any great noise as he went. For indeed a noise is troublesome, but especially if it be a contentions one. But this small Tract I hope will be far enough

## To the Reader.

nough from administering any occasion of that Nature ; if I could foresee that it was like to do so, it should never come abroad. For alas ! we have too much of that already.

You have it here offered to your Eye, the same as it was to your Ears, without any Alteration ; bating only some few Excerptions where they might be spared without prejudicing the Sence, that I might gratifie your Desire with as little Charge to you as might be. If I am not mistaken, you have here ( though very briefly ) the true Doctrine of Salvation by Grace betwixt the extreams on both Hands ; however weakly it be handled.

For I am Confident, that many weak People, who think they do exalt Grace, do greatly dishonour it, and strip it of its principal Glory, while they set it in Opposition to Evangelical Holiness and Obedience ; and therefore my earnest Prayer to God for you, and all the People of God, is the same  
with

## To the Reader.

Fountain Life,  
p. 435.

with the Reverend Mr. Flavell, saith he, God preserve all his People from the gross and vile Opinions of *Antinomian Libertines*, who cry up Grace and decry Obedience; who under specious Pretences of exalting a naked Christ upon the Throne, do indeed strip him naked of a great Part of his Glory, and vilely de-throne him, thus far Mr. Flavell: You have here (as I Judge) the true Doctrin of Grace, in a Plain and Easie Method and Stile, suited to the Capacities of the Meanest; and if this do contribute any thing to the settling of your Minds in the Truth and against Errors on either Hand; and to the furtherance and increase of your Faith and Holiness, I have my End and Design. If you and others of Christs Servants do but reap this Fruit by it, I matter not what others shall say of the Author, or the Work it self. And that you may do so, is and shall be

## To the Reader.

be the earnest Prayer of him, who is  
ambitious of no greater Thing in the  
World, than to be the Servant of  
Christ, and of your Souls, for his  
Sake,

John Sheffield.

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Salva-

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# SALVATION OF GRACE.

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EPHES. II. viii.

*For by Grace are ye saved thro'  
Faith, and that not of your  
selves, it is the Gift of God.*

**T**HE Apostle tells these *Ephesi-  
ans*, Chap. i. 16. That he did  
not cease to give Thanks to  
God, and Pray for them: To  
give Thanks for what God had already  
wrought in them, and done for them;  
and to pray for a greater increase of the  
Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, that  
they might know what is the Hope of  
B their

their Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of the Inheritance; and the surpassing greatness of his Power towards them that Believe, ver. 18, 19. which he compare to that mighty Power which raised Christ from the Dead, to the End of the first Chapter.

And Chap. 2. ver. 1. He shews, what was the Effects of this exceeding greatness of Power towards them, which was the quickening of them, when they were dead in Trespasses and Sins; and the preserving and increasing that Life, and perfecting of it in Glory, and that they might be sensible how mighty a Power was exerted towards them, he shews how sad their Case was; *Dead in Sin, and Children of Wrath*, ver. 1, 2, 3. Both legally and spiritually Dead; Dead in Sin, and Dead through Sin, or by Reason of Sin; dead to God, and to all spiritual and saving good; and liable by guilt to Eternal Death.

But if this be our Case, how or by whom are we saved and delivered out of it? Why, this is wrought by the exceeding greatness of God's Power, which he had spoken of. But what was the impulsive or moving Cause? Why, his own Grace; and here the Apostle doth in this  
Text



Text and Context, heap up many words, much of a like Import and Signification, as if he could never enough express the greatness and freeness of the Grace and Mercy of God towards Sinners: *Rich in Mercy, great Love* or much Love πολλήν ἀγάπην, ver. 4. And exceeding Riches of Grace, ver. 7. *By Grace ye are saved thro' Faith.*

We have here two Things. 1. The principal impulsive or moving Cause of the Salvation of Sinners, and that is Grace. 2. The Way or Means of our being made actual Partakers of this Salvation of Grace, and that is through Faith.

To explicate the Terms; *First*, What is meant by Grace? There are several Acceptions of this word *Grace*, but two most notable. 1. It is sometime taken for Gods free Favour and good Will. 2. And sometimes for the Effects of it in us. But here it is meant in the first Sence; the free Favour, good Will, or good Pleasure of God.

Here are several Words in this Text and Context, that do all express the impulsive, moving Cause of our Salvation; and every one hath something peculiar in it, the more fully to set forth the free

Favour, gracious Pleasure, and good Will of God in the Business, of the Salvation of Sinners. 1. Here is Love and great or much Love, which Notes a great or ardent Desire and Affection to any Thing or Person, and such as the Person loving doth rest or take pleasure in, and so some derive *ἀγάπη* from *ἀγαπᾷν*, as it is expressed, *Zeph. 3. 17. He will rest in his Love.*

2. Here is Mercy, and rich Mercy, that Notes Gods great Pity and Compassion towards those that are miserable, God loves the Angels, and is gracious to the Angels, but he is not said to be merciful to them, because they never were miserable.

3. Again, here is Grace, and *exceeding Riches of Grace*, and that Notes the freeness of Gods Love and Kindness, whereby he doth Things freely, without merit or desert, Grace doth all *gratis* without any precedent Debt or Obligation.

2. Are saved, some say that is inchoate and so would limit it to Justification. But other learned Expositors, as *Zanch. Simpli.* and *Beza*, say here is intended not only Justification, but whole and compleat Salvation, as is manifest from the whole

whole Context ; in *ver. 7.* of the former Chapter, he saith, *we have forgiveness of Sin*, in which is included Justification, and that of Grace. And then *Chap. 2. ver. 1, 5.* There he speaks of Sanctification, and adds, that this was by Grace ; and now again in the Text, he saith, *For by Grace ye are saved, quasi dicat*, all the steps and degrees of Salvation from the beginning to the end, from first to last is of Grace.

Through Faith or by Means of Faith, Faith being the means, dispositive Condition, Qualification, or Instrument of our receiving or being actually Partakers of it.

And that not of your Selves, *ὃ τὸ*, there is some Difference amongst Expositors, what this *ὃ τὸ*, doth refer to, some think to the whole Sentence, *quasi dicat*, and this, that you are saved is not of your Selves ; but rather I should think with other Expositors, that it doth refer to Faith, that is the immediate antecedent, *Ye are saved by Grace*, through Faith, and this Faith, *hoc ipsum*, this very Thing is not of your selves.

Doct. I. *That the principal Efficient and first moving Cause of a Sinners Salvation, from first to last is the free Grace of God.*

Doct. II. *That we receive and partake of Salvation, of Grace, through Faith, or by means of Faith.*

Doct. III. *That Salvation being through Faith, doth not hinder or oppugn its being of Grace, for Faith it self is of Grace, or the Gift of God which is the same ; nay, Faith is so far from being opposite to Grace, or making it to be less of Grace, that the Apostle saith, Rom. 4. 16. It is of Faith, that it might be by Grace.*

This great Work of the Salvation of Sinners, the Scripture sometimes ascribes to God the Father; thus he is called, *God our Saviour*, and it is *God that Justifies*: And sometimes to Christ the Mediator, therefore was his Name called *Jesus, a Saviour*, because he shall save his People from their Sins; and again, sometime we are said to be saved by *Grace*, as in the Text and elsewhere; and sometime by *Faith*; as Christ said to that Woman, *Tby Faith hath saved Tbee*; and the Apostle to the Jaylor, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy House*. You see the Scripture useth these several forms of

of speaking, in the Matter of Salvation; God saves us, and Christ saves us, and we are saved by *Grace*, and saved by *Faith*; and every one of these have a distinct Notion in the business of Salvation; and yet not one opposite to another; but one subordinate to another; and all do admirably Consent and Agree, and do not in the least interfere or clash.

When God is said to be our Saviour, that Notes, that he is the first Fountain and Original, the principal Author and efficient Cause of it. And when we are said to be saved by Mercy, or Grace, that shews us, what was the first internal moving Cause, that it is his own free Favour or good Will, without any Merit or Desert in the Sinner. And when Christ is called our Saviour, and said to save us, that shews the principal *medium*, the meritorious Cause through or for whose sake God vouchsafes his Mercy and Grace, and the blessed Effects of it to us; thus the very Words before the Text, and *Tit. 3. 6.* Again, when Faith is said to save us, that Notes the qualifying Condition, or receptive Disposition, whereby we are made, qualified, disposed and meet subjects of the Salvation that Gods free Grace doth give, and Christs Merit hath purchased for us. It

It is the principal Efficient, first moving Cause of a Sinners Salvation, that I shall speak to from this Text ; which from first to last is the free Grace of God.

Which Grace, that we may the better see ; understand what a State we are all in by the fall ; and that is in this Context, dead in Sin, legally and spiritually Dead.

Legally Dead, or as it is in other Terms, under the Curse, Children of Wrath. And spiritually Dead, or Dead in Sin, dead to God, and Holiness, and all spiritual and saving good ; having no more Inclination or Disposition to any spiritual and gracious Acts, than there is in a Dead-man to the Actions or Comforts of Life ; again Dead in sin, as fast bound, chained, and inflaved under the Power of fleshly vicious and sinful Dispositions, and habits, as a Dead-man is by Death, from ever rising by his own Power, such are we in a spiritual Sence.

If we have what is our due, that is Death, Eternal Death ; but if we be saved, that is of Grace and Favour.

It is God that is the principal Author and Efficient of Salvation. But if you ask, what moved him to it ? why he would so concern himself for the Recovery and Salvation

vation of lost and miserable Sinners? Why, it was only his own Grace, and free Favour that moved him to it. Consider Salvation in all the Parts of it, in all the Degrees and Steps that lead to it from first to last, and you shall see that Grace doth all.

1. It was of his Grace that he gave his Son to be our Saviour; the Scripture every where Attributes it to the Love of God, to lost Sinners, that he gave his Son Jesus Christ to be their Saviour, *John 3. 16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.* *Rom. 5. 8. God commended his Love to us, in that while we were Sinners Christ dyed for us.* *Heb. 2. 9. But we see Jesus ——— that by the Grace of God he should taste Death for every Man;* this Grace and Favour of God in providing us a Saviour, is exprest in all those Scriptures, that speak of God giving his Son, and sending him into the World, to be a Saviour, and a Propitiation for our Sins. *Gal 4. 4. But when the ——— God sent his Son made of a Woman, &c.* *1 John 4. 9, 10.* And this providing, and giving a Saviour for us, can be put upon no other account, but the free Grace and Favour of God towards us, for we deserved that God should have  
sent

sent an Executioner from Heaven, to execute the just Penalty of his broken Law upon us : As he sent an Angel to destroy the first-born of *Egypt*, and into the Camp of *Assyria*, that *slew one hundred fourscore and five thousand Men in one Night*. I say, we might rather have expected, that God should have sent an Executioner of his Wrath amongst us, and not a Saviour to save us from it. If God had dealt with us in Justice, according to our Deserts, we had then been as the fallen Angels are, bound in Chains of Darkness, without Hope or Possibility of Deliverance ; it is only his Grace and free Favour that makes all the Difference that there is betwixt us and them.

2. It was of his Grace, that in Christ, and for the sake of Christ, he hath made and offered to us a New Covenant, a better Covenant that offers Pardon, and Life, and Salvation, upon easier Terms, than the first Covenant did ; hence it is called by way of Distinction, and Eminence, the Covenant of Grace, and the Gospel of the Grace of God.

1. Partly because free Grace hath the principal Hand, and Stroke in the making of it ; hence the Covenant is called by the  
Name



Name of Mercy it self, *Mic.* 7. 20. God might, had he so pleased, have dealt with us, upon the Terms of the old broken Covenant, and since we had violated the Precept, he might with rigour have executed the Threatning. Justice deals with Men according to Desert, but it is Grace that gives that which is not due.

2. It is fitly called the Covenant of Grace, partly because of the abundant Riches of Gods Grace that it doth reveal, and make known to the World ; the Infinite Power, and Wisdom of God, was gloriously Displayed in the Creation ; his Righteousness and Holiness ; the exact Justice and Purity of his Nature in the Perfection of his Law ; but the Rich and Abundant Grace, and Mercy of God, was not made known to the World, at least not so gloriously, but by the New Covenant, *Tit.* 2. 11.

3. Again, it is fitly called the Covenant of Grace, because of the gracious Effects of it, or the great, free Favours, and Blessings that it confers upon all that are under it, and interested in it ; it Pardons those that are guilty of the Violation of the first Covenant, it forgives the Debt of Punishment, that the first Covenant did exact ; it justifies and acquits those

those that the first doth condemn; it saves those that by the first were Sentenced to Everlasting Destruction. It is Gods Instrument, whereby he gives many great, unspeakable, and undeserved Blessings and Priviledges, to miserable and lost Sinners; as a King doth by his Charter, grant many Priviledges and Immunities to a Corporation. Why so, the New Covenant is Gods Charter of Grace, whereby he gives the great and invaluable Priviledges, of Pardon and Peace with God, Justification, Adoption, Eternal Glory and Happiness to Sinners, that are altogether undeserving of these Things; nay, that by the first Covenant deserve the contrary.

It is a Covenant of Grace, because the Grace, Favour and Good-will of God doth freely give all the Benefits and Priviledges, that it doth contain, and doth confer upon the Children of Men.

4. Again, it is a Covenant of Grace, as it promiseth, and gives Grace, to perform whatsoever it requires, as a Condition of its subsequent Benefits.

3. It is of meer Grace that any are elected and chosen to obtain Salvation by Christ. And this is the Spring of all that  
spe-

special Mercy that some of the lost Children of Men receive, more than others. That there is a Christ, a Saviour, given to the lost World, a new and better Covenant, made and offered to undone Sinners for their Acceptance; this is Grace, and rich Grace, vouchsafed to the humane kind in general, which is not done to the fallen Angels. We Children of Men have a Saviour, provided and given for us, when they have none, we are through the Grace of God in Christ under a better Covenant than that we broke; while they are held strictly bound to the Terms of their broken Covenant.

But now Election, that is a more special and distinguishing Grace still, this is a Grace vouchsafed, to some of the Children of Men and not unto others.

That there is an Election whereby God from Eternity, doth pick and choose some from amongst the rest of Mankind, whom he will actually bring to Salvation by Christ, in the way and means that he hath appointed in the Gospel, cannot be denied without manifest Violence to the Scriptures; and this is meerly of his Grace, and good Pleasure, *Eph. 1. 5, 6. Rom. 11. 5, 6.* Grace is the sole Spring of this Election, it is not out of any foresight of Me-

Merit; or Desert in those that he chooseth, any more than in those that he passeth by. He did not choose any to Life and Salvation, because he foresaw that they would believe; or more readily comply with the Gospel Offer and Call, than others; as some say: No, God did not choose any because he foresaw that they would believe, or be more Holy and Obedient than others, but that he might make them so, *Eph. 1. 4. Rom. 8. 29.* What he saith of the the whole Nation of the *Israelites*, is true of every Elect Soul, *Dent. 7. 7, 8.*

But here take Notice, that though God doth of rich Grace, and the meer good pleasure of his Will, choose some to life, and not out of a foresight of their Faith, or Holiness, or good Improvements; yet it doth not therefore follow, that he doth of his meer Will and Pleasure decree to damn any, without any consideration of their Sin and Demerit; for there is a vast difference betwixt these two, Election to Life and Salvation; and ordaining to Wrath and Perdition: for in the one *viz.* That execution of his Wrath and Justice, he acts as a righteous Governour, and deals with Men according to his Laws, that he gave them for their rule; but in the

the other he acts as a gracious Benefactor and free dispenser of his own Gifts, and so may without Partiality, or Injustice, or wrong to any, bestow his free Benefits and Favours, upon whom, and in what measure, and degree he please.

4. *Effectual calling*, which is another link in the golden chain of salvation, is of grace, 2 Tim. 1. 9. *Who hath saved us and called us with a Holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace.* As the Heirs of Salvation are distinguished from others, by Election, in the Bosome and secret Purpose of God from all Eternity; so they are in time distinguished from others, by Regeneration and Effectual Calling; and this you see is of Grace too; not upon the account of any Worth, Merit, or Desert in them that are Called and Regenerated, more than in others that are not so: though the ordinary way whereby God Calls and Converts any, is in the Use of the Means that he hath appointed for that end, and in the serious diligent Attendance upon them, yet even that is of Grace too; Grace disposes the hearts of some to use the Means of Salvation, while others do neglect and slight them; and Grace, that is a more Common Grace, makes some serious and dili-

diligent therein, or else they would be as vain and heedless, and slighty in them as any others ; it is Grace that leads Men on step by step from one thing to another, from Ignorance to Knowledge, from Carnal Security to a Conviction of their undone and lost Estate, and from Conviction to Conversion, and a hearty Closure with Christ upon the Gospel Terms ; Grace hath a secret, powerful, though oft an undiscerned hand, in leading a straying Sinner unto Christ, and in turning a carnal, worldly Heart to fix it self upon God, as its end and chief Good. As a River or Fountain, that runs a great way underground unseen, but at last breaks out into view upon the surface of the Earth ; so Election is a secret, that is a great while hidden and undiscerned, but in the Effectual Calling and Conversion of a Soul, then it doth as it were appear above ground, in its precious and saving Fruits and Effects. This *Effectual Calling* is the beginning of Salvation in us, all that we have before that, is no more than what many may have that perish for ever. many have great Knowledge of Divine things, and Convictions, and some superficial Joy in the Word and Ordinances ; as the stony-ground-hearers, and yet perish at last ;  
but

but when we are Effectually Called, and truly Converted, then we begin to be saved, then we partake of *those things that accompany Salvation*, as the Apostle speaks; then we taste the delicious Fruits of Grace, then we experience its powerful, and saving Effects in and upon our selves; then the *Day-Star* arises in our hearts; then the blessed Day of Grace begins to dawn, and we see the light of it, and feel the Warmth of the Sun of Righteousness, refreshing and healing our Souls. Now that this is of Grace, and not from the good Improvement only of the Natural Power in some, more than in other, doth thus appear.

1. From the plain direct Assertion of Scripture, *Rom. 9.16. It is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that sheweth mercy. 1 Cor. 5. 7. Who maketh thee to differ from another?* If any could reply, and say, that he by the meer Power or Improvement of Nature, had made the difference for the better betwixt him and another, or that he had acquired any spiritual Indowment or gracious Disposition that was not the Free Gift of Grace to him; that would quite invalidate and overthrow the Apostles Argument in that place; but the Apostles Argument is undoubtedly good; *Ergo.* C 2,

2. That *Effectual Calling* is of Grace and Favour, doth appear from the manifest arbitrary distinction that it makes, in those those that are the Subjects of it; we see that Grace doth pick and cull out, here one and there another, arbitrarily; oft we see those called that have less Helps and Advantages for Salvation, while those that have greater are left still in their State of Sin and Death; and those that to all appearance seem less prepared for Grace, while those that have greater are passed by; as our Saviour saith, *Two shall in be the same House, or Bed together, the one taken and the other left*; so Grace doth manifestly in the Dispensation of it in the Gospel. Oft we see the Children of the same Parents, that have the same Education, Instruction, and Advantages every way, yet *one taken, and another left*; those that sit under the same Ministry, and hear the same Sermons, yet *one taken and another left*; Grace doth pick and cull out, here one and there another, and leaves others that to all appearance, was in as good, nay, a better Preparation to receive Grace. As our Saviour saith *I thank thee O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent and hast revealed them to Babes*; and for what reason? why; because it so pleased Thee.

3. But



3. But there are some extraordinary Instances of Conversion, that will put it past all doubt, that it is Grace, and Free Grace that makes the difference betwixt one and another, and not the good Improvement of natural Power; who will say that *Paul* while he was a Persecutor, and a Blasphemer, and in the height of his Rage against Christ, and his People and interest, was in a greater Preparation for Grace, than that young Man in the Gospel, of whom it is said Christ *loved Him*, and said he was not far from the Kingdom of God, and yet for ought we do know, he never entred into it; and is it likely that the Thief upon the Cross, or the *Samaritan* Woman that lived in Adultery, was in a greater preparation for Grace, than those many that followed Christ up and down from Place to Place to hear his Heavenly Doctrine? and yet it is said of them, *Job. 6.* that *They went back and walked no more with Him.*

All must confess, whether they are willing or not, that it was pure Grace, and Free Grace that in these, and many such like Instances, doth make the difference, and not the good Improvement of Nature.

I readily acknowledge, that it is not

Gods usual way, to take Persons as it were reeking-hot out of their Sins, into a State of Grace and Favour ; to call Men to himself while in the neglect of his Instituted Means ; and as it were, fighting against Him.

Well ; but it is the same Grace, that extraordinarily calls some few ; and ordinarily calls most in the serious and diligent Use of his Appointed Means. If it be beyond all Question, that it is meer Grace that calls some that were running away from God as fast as they could ; none ( that considers what the consequences will be ) will venture to say, that it is not the same Grace, that calls all that are called, though in a different way : God meets with some few in the midst of their Career of Sin, that none shall be able to deny the efficiency of his Grace in the work, but his most usual, ordinary way, wherein he calls most, is in a serious, close attendance upon Ordinances, that his Wisdom may be glorified, together with his Grace, in blessing Means that he hath appointed and useth for that End.

5. *Justification* is of Grace, which is another link in the Golden Chain of Salvation. Justification is God's accounting

us righteous and dealing with us as righteous Persons, in discharging us from the Curse of the Law and Eternal Condemnation, for the sake of Christ's Meritorious Sacrifice and Righteousness made ours by Faith. And this is an act of Gods Free Grace towards us, *Rom. 3. 24. being justified freely by his Grace* and *Tit. 3. 7. That is of Grace or Favour*, when a Benefit or Priviledge is bestowed that was not due, that could not in Justice be claimed, thus the Apostle opposeth Grace and Debt, *Rom. 4. 4.* Now our due is Death and Wrath; it was just and due, that we should suffer the Penalty of that Law which we had violated. but God instead of executing the Penalty and Curse of the Law, which we had deserved; for the sake of Christ and his Righteousness, he doth freely acquit and discharge us of it; he accounts us righteous, and deals with us as righteous Persons, for the sake of Christ, whom in Justice he might have condemned and executed as guilty and rebellious Sinners.

6. *Sanctification* is of Grace, now Sanctification, as it is distinguished from Regeneration and Conversion, is but the further increase and improvement, the further strengthening and confirming,

that Principle or Seed, or Habit of Grace, that was first given, and infused in our *Effectual Calling*; and therefore all the Parts of it, such as Faith, Love, Resignation to God, Trust and Dependance upon him, Subjection to his Governing and Disposing Will; these and such like, that are the parts of Sanctification, are called the Graces of the Spirit, because Grace doth freely give and bestow, both the first Principle, and the after increase and improvement of them. *It is good, saith the Apostle, that the heart be established with Grace*; and why called Grace? but because it is the fruit and effect of Gods free Grace and Favour to us.

7. *Perseverance*, and holding on to the end in Faith and Holiness is of Grace too; the same hand that works the Principle of Faith and Holiness at first, doth constantly cherish and preserve it, that it do not fail or be extinct; as Conservation is said to be a continued Creation, that is, God puts forth the same Almighty Power in preserving his Creatures in their being, as he did at first in bestowing it upon them; so the same Grace and Favour is renewed and continued, in the exercise, increase, and persevering in Grace to the end,

end, as was at first put forth; in the working of it. And hence our Saviour prays for his Disciples, *John 17. 11. Holy Father! Keep them through thy Name.* 1 Pet 1. 5. *Kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation.* Phil. 1. 6. *He that hath begun a good Work in you will perfect it.* Alas! should Grace turn us off to shift for our selves, and look to our selves alone; (after it hath brought us into a State of Grace, and to an Interest in Christ and his Covenant) we should quickly prove Bankrupts, and lose all again. Such is the strength of remaining Corruption within, and of Temptations and Alurements without; and such is the Subtilty, Malice and Power of the Devil to manage all to the best advantage against our Souls; that if Grace did not keep it's hold of us we should quickly make Shipwreck of Faith, and a good Conscience, and our Souls too. Grace in the Souls of the best, but especially in young Converts, is like a Spark of Fire in the midst of a Heap of Ashes, that if the kind Breath of Grace did not constantly cherish and keep it in, it would quickly be extinguished.

8. The Eternal Reward of Glory and Happiness in Heaven is of Grace too,

this we have in the Text, *By Grace ye are saved*: That is compleatly, *Tit. 3. 5. Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us. Rom. 6. 23. The Gift of God is Eternal Life.* After all that we have done in a patient continuance in well doing, and working out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and persevering in Faith and Holiness to the end; yet Eternal Life is a free Gift after all this; though it be in some Sence a Reward, yet that makes it nevertheless a Gift in it self, *Jude 21. Looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus unto Eternal Life*; thus you see, that the Salvation of guilty Sinners is from first to last of Grace; Grace begins, and carries it on, through the various steps and degrees of it in this Life; and Grace perfects and compleats all at last too; the Scripture doth *delight* to compare the new Creation to a beautiful and stately Building, wherein Grace doth all, laies every Stone in it from first to last; Grace laies the Foundation and the chief Corner Stone, which is Redemption by Christ and our Election in him, *1 Pet. 2. 6. Behold I lay in Sion a chief Corner-Stone* — and Grace carries on the Building, and Rears up the Walls, in Effectual Calling, Sanctification

Etification and Perseverance therein ; and the Roof and Top-stone of Eternal Life and Glory is laid on with shouting, *crying Grace, Grace unto it ;* as it is said of the second Temple, *Zach. 4. 6, 7.* Thus as one well faith, the New Man is from the Sole of the Foot, to the Crown of the Head, all made up of Grace, and all the Links in the golden Chain of Salvation, are all of pure beaten and massy Grace.

2. I shall now shew you the Properties of this Grace, or the Epethites that are given to it, for the Scripture doth not only call it Grace, but it gives many Epethites to it, the better to shew its Nature, and the more fully to discover and manifest its Glory.

1. It is free Grace, self-moving Grace, that fetches not its Motives and Inducements of any thing it bestows from Man, as a deserving and procuring Cause, but it Acts towards us, and bestows its Gifts and Blessings upon us of its own, free, gracious and bountiful Inclination, Grace it self, signifies the freeness of the Gift ; for Grace is as much as *Gratis*, and doth all *Gratis*, that is freely. As a Gift signifies the freeness of what is bestowed ; so  
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God is said to give *Christ*, and give *Faith*, and give *Repentance*, and give *Eternal Life*, and give the *Heavenly Kingdom*; one would think that these Words themselves should sufficiently express the freeness of Grace: So true is that common saying, *What is freer then Gift?* Yet the Scripture doth frequently adjoin the Word Free, and freely, to Grace, and Gift, as if it could never enough set forth, how Free the Grace of God is in the Salvation of guilty, and Dead Sinners, *Rom. 3. 24. Being justified freely by his Grace. Ver. 32. How shall he not with him freely give us all Things?* And to this Sence do some expound that Scripture, *John 1. 16. Of his fulness have we received, Grace for Grace*, that is Grace for Graces sake; indeed there is nothing that we receive from God, all things that tend to Salvation, the Principle, the Degrees of it, and Salvation it self at last; but as to the Thing it self, it is altogether a Free Gift of God to us, though as to the Order of conferring, some of Gods Gifts do require a preceding Disposition and Qualification in the Subject; which is also a Gift of Grace too.

2. The Grace whereby we are saved is a large and an abundant Grace, thus the  
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Scripture doth not only call it Grace, but abundance of Grace, Rom. 5. 17. Yea, and exceeding abundant, 1 Tim. 1. 14. The word abundant, is *supra modum*, not a short, narrow, scanty Grace, but a Grace that overflows, and exceeds all Measure, a Grace that cannot be measured, or fully comprehended, whose Dimensions cannot be founded or fathomed; and so likewise it is called, *Riches of Grace*, Eph. 1. 7. Nay, *exceeding Riches of Grace*, Eph. 2. 7. Now Riches you know speaks great Plenty, Largeness, Fulness, and Abundance, of the Things that we speak of; and it is rich and abundant Grace considered either as it is in God, or as to the Fruits and Effects of it as bestowed upon us.

This Grace of God is an everspringing and overflowing Fountain-Grace, nay an Ocean Grace, that hath neither Banks nor Bottom; as doth appear.

i. From the great unworthiness and very ill deserving of those that are the Objects of it; alas! we were not small Offenders, but such as had provoked, dishonoured, and contemned God in a very high manner; we were not only Sinners, but lothsome Sinners, such as his Holy Eyes could not but abhor; not only lothsome Sinners, but Enemies, and that is worse still; it

it is less for a Man to shew kindness to an unworthy, unlovely Person, than to a mortal Enemy; nay, we were not only Enemies, but stubborn Enemies, proud contemptuous Enemies, that neither did seek nor desire his Favour, now the worse those are that are the Objects of his Grace; the more abundant is that Grace, that extends it self to them. It is less in the King, to extend his Favour to an ordinary Malefactor; than if he should do it to a profest Enemy to his Crown and Dignity; and it is less to shew Favour to Enemies that sue and intreat for it, than to contemptuous Enemies that seem to scorn and slight it: Why, such were we all when Gods Grace and Favour first shone upon us: O! the superabundant Riches of Grace.

2. The abundant Riches of Grace doth appear from the number and greatness of our wants and miseries that it supplies; and of our Sins that it Pardons and Forgives. Alas! if it was not a rich and abundant Grace; our slights and neglects of it, our resistings and strivings against it, our unworthy carriage under it; our repeated sinning after Pardon received; our violating the Obligations even of Mercy

Mercy and Grace it self; our often breaking our solemn Vows and Promises, of new and better Obedience; So that had it not been an exceeding abundant Grace, it had been wearied and tired out before this Time; as God saith of the old World, when he saw that the wickedness of Man was exceeding great, it is said, *That it repented him, that he had made Man, and it grieved him at his very Heart*, Gen. 6. 6. So were not his Grace towards us an exceeding abundant Grace, our many Provocations, Frowardness, and ill Returns would have made him repent before now, that ever his Grace did take in hand, to recover and save such untractable, froward, and ungrateful Wretches as we.

3. This Grace of God whereby we are saved is a wise Grace too, a Grace that in the Dispensation of it, or the bestowing of its Fruits and Effects upon us, doth discover and manifest the unsearchable Depths of Gods Wisdom, as well as of his Love and Goodness; *Eph. 1. 7, 8.*

——— *According to the Riches of his Grace wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence.* Here you see, that it is Grace, and rich Grace that is the rise  
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and spring of all, that lost and undone Sinners do receive from God, and in this, Grace God abounds towards us, but it is *in all Wisdom and Prudence*; now I conceive the meaning to be this, that though it be free Grace and Favour in God that is the Spring of all that we receive, yet an infinite and unsearchable Wisdom, doth order, direct, and appoint the way and manner of its being communicated and bestowed upon us; Grace saves us, but Wisdom dispences it in such a way and order, as doth most exalt the Glory of the Divine Majesty, and that not only of some, but of all his Perfections; and yet so, as that the Creature is most strongly obliged and ingaged to his Duty too, *viz.* to the greatest Subjection to God, and dependance upon him: Grace doth all in the business of Salvation, and yet in such an Order and Method, that Man is not left to his own Will, to live as he list; nor allowed or indulged in Sloth and Carelessness, in Negligence or Indifferency: But contrarily is obliged more strongly then ever, to the closest adherence to God and Obedience to his Commands; here is the Wisdom of Grace, that while it doth all, and we can do nothing without it; and the whole Glory  
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of our Salvation must be ascribed to Grace; and nothing to our selves; yet our Obligations to Duty, are not the less, but the greater; while Grace saves us freely, yet it obligeth us to the greatest seriousness and diligence in working out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling. Yea, to strive, and fight, and run, and give all Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure.

The Wisdom of Grace might be shewed at large, both in the Impetration, and the Application of Salvation; as in reconciling the Justice and Mercy of God; and the Honour of God as Rector, and of his violated Law; together with the Impunity and Happiness of the Sinner. And in the Application; in making God and Christ to be all in all, in the business of our Salvation, and yet in such a wise way and order, that Mans Duty in seeking, and praying, and waiting: Yea, and that in the closest Attendance upon God in the use of his appointed Means, and in the Duties of Holiness and Obedience, is not vacated or made needless thereby; but contrarily is more strongly enforced than it could have been any other way.

There are too many look only at the free-

freeness of Grace, and never consider the Wisdom of it, whereas this is the Thing that most of all fills the Angels with wonder, *Eph. 3. 16.* — *Might be known the manifold Wisdom of God.* 1 Pet. 1. 12.

—— *Which Things the Angels desire to look into*; Παρεν'ταί, it signifies, such a narrow intent prying, as we use to do into a curious Piece, wherein we discern a wonderful deal of Art and Skill; and were the Wisdom of it, but considered and understood by us, it would make us say with the Apostle, *O the Depths of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God, how unsearchable!* &c. All the Perfections of God, do mutually reflect a Luster upon each other, so here the Wisdom of Grace doth not in the least diminish its freeness; but greatly adds to the Glory of it.

4. The Grace whereby we are saved is a Pure and Holy Grace; in that while it imbraces the Sinner with a most free and abundant Favour; yet without the least *Countenance* or *Favour* to *Sin* it self; tho it pardon the *Sinner*, yet it doth not spare, but most severely punishes the *Sin*; nay, it discovers the greatest hatred and abhorrence of *Sin*, while it shews the richest and most abundant Favour and  
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Kindness to the Sinner : Though it Pardon the greatest and worst of Sinners, and multiplies Pardons in blotting out Sins that are numberless, and for quality of the most Crimson dye; yet it doth this in such a way that it gives not the least Countenance, or Incouragement to any to Sin or to continue in it; nay, the rich Grace displayed upon Mount *Sion* doth more effectually suppress and destroy the Reign of Sin then all the Fire and Thunder of Mount *Sinai*; though it Pardons Sin freely, yet it doth it in such a way and order, that it doth more powerfully restrain and awe the Soul from continuing in the Practise of it; then all the terrible Threats of Wrath in the Law, *Tit. 2. 11, 12. The Grace of God that brings Salvation——teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly*; hence when God proclaims his Name so full of Grace and Mercy, *Exod. 34. 6, 7. —Merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin, (yet it is added) and that will by no means clear the Guilty. Psalm 99. 8. —Thou wast a God that forgavest them, but tookest Vengeance of their Inventions*; those emblematical appearan-

ces of Christ, that we read of, *Rev.* 1. 13, 14, 15 do not obscurely shew his Holiness and Purity, his Hatred and Revenues of Impenitence and Disobedience commixt with his Love, and Grace, and Kindness to Sinners. Here you see him represented in his Priestly Garments, *ver.* 13. which shows his Love and Grace to Sinners, in his Sacrifice and Intercession; but *ver.* 15. *His Feet as it were Brasses that burns in a Furnace*, which shews his fiery Wrath and Indignation against all impenitent ones: Hence it is manifest, that those who do from the freeness and abundance of Grace take encouragement to Sin, never had any Experience of this Grace in themselves.

5. The Grace whereby we are saved, is a powerful Grace, *Eph.* 1. 19. — *And what is the exceeding greatness of his Power to us-ward, who believe*; it is an exceeding Power that Grace puts forth, in the Conversion and Salvation of carnal, and dead Sinners. It overcomes the Resistance and Opposition that the carnal, corrupt will, assisted by the Devil and all that the Powers of Darkness can make against it. It is a mighty Power indeed, that of Stones raises up Children to *Abraham*, that raises dead Sinners to Life, that have not  
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only, like *Lazarus*, lain four Days in the Grave; but that have lain many Years rotting in their Filth and Putrefaction; that is a mighty Power, that makes dry and dead Bones to live; which makes a Holy Temple for God himself to dwell in, of that Heart, which was a sty of every filthy and unclean Lust. Were not this Grace whereby we are saved, an Almighty Grace, we had been all to this Day, yea, and for ever, rotting in the Grave of our Sins, bound in the Chains of guilt and Death; and as it is a mighty Power that first raises us to a spiritual Life, so it is the same mighty Power that keeps us still, *through Faith unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. I shall briefly open the other two Points, and then Apply all together.

1. What is the meaning of this Salvation being through Faith.

The meaning is this, that God and Christ in the Gospel Covenant, do require Faith on our parts, in order to our being actual Partakers and Possessors of this Salvation; which Gods Grace doth freely give, and Christ hath merited for us; our actual Interest in and claim to this Salvation, is suspended till we believe; which is the same that our Saviour himself saith; when he commissioned his

Apostles to Preach the Gospel of Salvation to the lost World, *Mark 16. 16. Go Preach the Gospel ——— He that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned.* It is freely offered and given by God and Christ in the Gospel Covenant, but Faith is required as a necessary Disposition, in all that shall actually receive and partake of it.

1. Sincere Faith, which is the unfeigned Consent of the Heart to receive and close with Christ upon the Terms of the Gospel Covenant, is necessary to our first Interest and Title to it ; that is, before a Soul is brought to this believing or closing with Christ, it is (as to the special and principal Effects and Fruits of it) but a Grace offered, a Christ, a Saviour, and Salvation offered and tendered ; but when we believe then it is a Salvation begun in us, then we actually partake of some of the saving Fruits and Effects of this Grace, and have a just Title and Claim to compleat Salvation, to be given us in Gods Time and Way.

2. The continued Exercise of, and persevering in this Faith, and the necessary Fruits of it ; Holiness and sincere Obedience to Christ and his Commands, is necessary to our final and compleat Salvation ;

on; that is, to our full Deliverance from Sin and Satan, Death and Hell; and our Possession of Eternal Life and Happiness, not that one who truly believes, if he should Dye the next Day or Hour, before the Performance of any one further Act of Holiness and Obedience; would want any Thing, to qualifie him for compleat Salvation; no, you must not understand it so. For true Faith, as it justifies the Believer at the very Moment of his believing; so it would save him if he should Dye the next Moment: But if God gives us further Life and Time, Perseverance in Faith and Holiness to the very end of our Lives, is necessary to continue our Right and Title to Salvation; as Faith was at first to the obtaining of it. Hence are those Promises of compleat Salvation to continued Perseverance in Faith and Holiness, *Rom.2.7. To them who by patient Continuance in well doing seek for ---Eternal Life.* James 1.12. *Blessed is he that indures Temptation, for after he is tryed he shall receive the Crown of Life.* Rev.2.10. *Be thou faithful to the Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.* 2 Pet. 1.5, 6, 7, 8, 11. *Give Diligence to add to your Faith Vertue, and to Vertue, Knowledge, &c. ——— for so an entrance shall be mini-*

*stred unto you, into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour: And those Threats on the other Hand to those that do not Persevere. Heb. 10. 38. — If any Man draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him. Heb. 12. 14. — And Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.*

What I shall say to the last Point of Doctrine, (*viz. That Salvation being thro' Faith, doth not hinder or oppugn its being of Grace*) shall be in answering three Questions or Objections, that may be made against its being of Grace.

*Quest. 1.* How is our Salvation of Grace, since it is not without the Merit and Satisfaction of Christ? But before I come directly to Answer this, I must Premise something for the better Understanding of this Matter which is this.

That the Scripture, speaking of the Salvation of Sinners, as it doth assert that it is of Grace; so we frequently meet with this Phrase that it is through Faith, and elsewhere most frequently, that it is thro' Christ. It is of Grace through Faith, saith the Text, 2 Tim. 3. 15. — *Wise unto Salvation, through Faith in Christ Jesus. Heb. 6. 12. — Who through Faith*

*Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.*  
 And elsewhere we find that Salvation and all the Parts of it are said to be through Christ, *Rom. 3. 24.* — *Through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* *Eph. 1. 7.* — *Redemption through his Blood.* *Tit. 3. 5, 6.* — *But according to his Mercy he saved us — which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;* in these, and many other Scriptures, you may observe, that Grace, Mercy, or Love, as it is a Love of Benevolence or Goodwill; is at the Head or Top of all; which is Gods gracious Free, Propension and Inclination to do good to us, to Pardon and Save us; this you see is at the Head of all, and before all; but the Effects and Fruits of it, is said to be given to us sometimes through Christ, through his Blood, and through his Redemption, and sometimes through Faith; and yet these hinder not its being of Grace.

1. Salvation is through Christ with respect to God giving and bestowing of it, that he may give such great and undeserved Mercies and Benefits to Sinners, in a way becoming himself, becoming of his Wisdom, Holiness, and Justice, which could not be, if they were given absolutely without respect to the Redemption and Satisfaction of Christ,

2. And it is said to be through Faith, with respect to our receiving and being made actual Partakers of these Benefits, of Pardon, Life, and Salvation: We must receive these great and undeserved Benefits through Faith, and partake of them only by Faith; that we may in our very partaking of them, honour both the Father and the Son, both our Supream Rector, and Redeemer; that is we must receive and partake of them in such a way, wherein we shall acknowledge, admire, and adore the Love and Mercy, the Wisdom, Holiness, and Justice of God the Father: Together with the Love, Grace, Condescension, and Kindness of our Saviour and Redeemer. God gives Salvation through Christ and his Redemption, that he may give as becomes himself, so as becomes, an infinitely Wise, Holy, and Just Governour; and we must receive or partake of it only through Faith, that we may receive it as becomes our selves, that is, as becomes miserable, guilty, lost, and undone Sinners; we must receive the Salvation of Grace, in such a way, wherein our very receiving, is an acknowledgment that our selves are nothing, and that God and Christ is all; that even when we receive a Pardon, we shall at  
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the same time, yea, in the same Act acknowledge that we deserve to be condemned ; and that Gods Grace freely bestows all upon us for the sake of the Redemption and Satisfaction of Christ ; so much in the general, and which will afford Light for the solving of the following Questions or Objections.

*Obj.* 1. How is our Salvation of Grace, and of such free Grace, when it is not without the Merit and Satisfaction of Christ, when so great a Price, as the Life and Blood of the Son of God, was exacted by God, and paid by Christ for the Purchase of it ?

*Ans.* The *Socinians* will easily answer this in their way, for they say that our Pardon and Salvation ; is meerly an Act of Dominion and Favour ; and not procured by the Sufferings of Christ, as a Punishment and Satisfaction for our Sins: For they say that Christs Sufferings was no Punishment for our Sin, nor any proper Satisfaction to Divine Justice ; and that our Sin was no antecedent impulsive Cause of Christs Suffering, nor his Sufferings any meritorious Cause of our Pardon or Salvation. But this cannot be admitted, without subverting the whole Gospel, and destroying the very Foundations

ons of the Christian Religion; for this makes the whole Mediation, Death and Sufferings of Christ to be in vain, or of very little use; for they assign but little, if any thing more, to the Death of Christ then what may be attributed to the Death and Sufferings of the Martyrs.

This therefore must be acknowledged that the Death and Sufferings of Christ were a Punishment for our Sins, a proper Satisfaction to Divine Justice, a price of our Redemption, and yet that our Pardon and Salvation is of Grace notwithstanding.

For the right Understanding of which it is necessary to shew.

1. How or in what Relation God is chiefly to be considered in this business of the Redemption and Salvation of Sinners.

2. What is the Reason and Use of Christs Sufferings.

1. God in the Business of Redemption, is to be considered principally as the supreme Ruler and Governour of the World; infinitely Wise, Holy and Just, who was greatly offended and provoked by Sin; and his Law and Government slighted, despised, and trampled upon by Sinners; and yet of his own infinitely good and gracious Nature, was propense  
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and inclined to shew Pity and Mercy, yea, to deliver and save his miserable Creatures, that had made themselves so by their Sin and Apostasie. But this could not be effected without some way or *medium*, whereby the Honour of God's Law; and of his Wisdom, Justice, and Holiness, as the righteous Governour of the World shall be secured and preserved; for God can do nothing unjustly, nothing unwisely, or unholily; but should he of meer Grace and Favour without any Punishment of Sin, or a sufficient Satisfaction to his Justice, have pardoned the Sin of Man, there would have lain great Imputations against his Wisdom, and Holiness; his Truth and Justice, and such inconveniences as would have reproached, if not subverted his Government. It may not be amiss to give you alight touch of this; for I design to not insist upon it so largely as it might be.

1. If God should have pardoned and saved Sinners without a Satisfaction, this would have reflected upon his Wisdom; for since he had with infinite Wisdom and Counsel made a Law for the Government of his Creatures; with a Penalty annexed, in case of Disobedience, how could it stand with his Wisdom to suffer the

the Contempt and Violation of it, and of his own Authority therein; to go altogether unpunished? What? to have his Law trampled upon; and as it were made void as soon as made; if he should suffer this to go unpunished, he would seem to disregard his own Law, in the Sanction of it, as much as his Creature had done the Precept of it.

Again should he suffer the Violation of of his Law to go altogether unpunished; would it not seem as if he now saw Reason to alter his Mind; since he saw good not to exact that Punishment he had denounced.

2. And if he should have exacted no Punishment or Satisfaction for Sin, there would lye a great Impeachment against his Justice and Wisdom together; for, either Sin did deserve Punishment, and as great a Punishment as was threatened, or it did not deserve it. If it did not deserve it, then it was unjust to enact it in the Law: But if it did deserve it, as no doubt it did; then upon the entrance of Sin Justice must necessarily require, that either the Punishment threatened, or an equivalent, and such as shall be full Satisfaction be exacted.

And here observe, that though a Creditor,

ditor may freely forgive a Debt; that is owing to him without Injustice, yet a Governour in many Cases cannot forgive a Criminal without Injustice, because Punishments are in some Cases absolutely necessary, for the keeping up a due Reverence and Regard of the Governour, and of his Laws. And likewise for the good of the Common-wealth, the preserving of due Order, and the securing of the Lives and Properties of the Subjects; why; God is here to be considered as the righteous *Governour of the World.*

3. And there would lye an Impeachment against his Truth and Veracity too; for having threatened such a Punishment for the Violation of his Law; would not his Veracity be called into *Question* if none was exacted.

4. And from all these there would arise a great inconveniency and disorder in the future Government of the World; for Men would hence take occasion to imbolden themselves in Sin; and flatter themselves with Hopes of Impunity in it; for they might thus Reason; if God did once, without any Satisfaction, shew mercy to his sinning Creatures, and that contrary to the Sentence of his own Law, then why may he not do so again? And, if it be

be not inconsistent with his Nature, and governing Justice, to let one Sin go unpunished (and that such a one as did *quantum in se* spoil the design of his works as soon as made) then why not another, and another, and so Men would be encouraged to Hope, that notwithstanding all the threatenings of Gods Law, that yet they might have Peace though they did walk on in the ways of their own Hearts.

Nay ; and it would lay a Foundation for Men to distrust and be suspicious, of the certainty and stability of his Promise too ; for if God do disregard the threatning of his Law, then why not the Promise too ; and so both the stability of his Promise, and the awe and terrour of his Threats, would be mightily shaken at once ; the wicked imboldened and hardened in Sin, with Hopes of Impunity, notwithstanding all his Threats. And the Comforts and Confidence of the Righteous weakened notwithstanding all his Promises.

These and many more such like great inconveniencies and disorders would necessarily have followed if Sin should have been pardoned, and Sinners saved without a Satisfaction to the Justice of God.

These Things are necessary to understand the Reason and Use of Christs *Sufferings*.

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2. And now here comes in the Necessity, and Reason of Christ Sufferings ; not that God was so delighted with the Blood and Sufferings of Christ, meerly considered as Sufferings ; that he would sell his great Benefits to us, for the Blood of his innocent Son : nor to incline God to be merciful, that was before averse to it. No ; but since he was propense to shew Mercy, he might in this way do it, without any prejudice to his other Perfections, because in the Death and Sufferings of Christ, there is a sufficient *salvo* for the Honour of his Law and Government, and of his Wisdom, Holiness, and Justice ; so that now his Mercy and Kindness is exercised in pardoning of guilty Sinners, without any Impeachment of the Honour of his other Perfections ; he can now be just as well as merciful in Pardoning, and holy as well as pitiful and kind in Sparing.

And his rich and free Grace in pardoning and saving Sinners in this way doth thus appear.

1. In that this way for the Satisfaction of his own Justice, and for the vindicating the Honour of his Law and Government, was of his own finding out and provideing ; the Scripture every where attributes the contrivance of Redemption to

to God himself, *Job 33. 24. — I have found a ransom*; God did out of his own Treasure provide for the Satisfaction of his own Justice; the giving of Christ to be our Redeemer, was the Fruit of his free self-moving Love and Grace, *Job. 3. 16. God so love the World that he gave his Son.*

2. His Grace appears in accepting of what Christ did and suffered for us, so as thereupon, and for the sake of Christ to Pardon and Acquit us, when we beleive in him; for though the Suffering of Christ, were abundantly sufficient to make Satisfaction; yet it is of the free Grace of God to accept them on our behalf; for in that very Thing there is a Relaxation of the Law, for that did threaten *every* Offendor in his own Person, and none else.

3. Nay here seems to be a more abundant Grace and Love in giving Pardon and Salvation through Christ, then if he had given it as a meer Act of Dominion and Favour, without any Satisfaction to his Justice. For you see that the Sufferings of Christ was not to purchase Gods Love of Goodwill to us, for that was Antecedent to the Sufferings of Christ, and the moving Cause of his giving Christ; but the true Reason of Christs Sufferings is, that  
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the Honour of his Law and Government, and of all his Perfections might be secured and provided for, in the exercise of his Grace, and pardoning Mercy towards us. Now that he should give his only begotten and dearly beloved Son; to be so humbled and abased, to undergo such Shame and Misery and Death for us, this was of all others the highest Instance and Demonstration of his Grace and Love to us; it was impossible that he should be merciful at a dearer Rate, or shew his Love and Kindness in a more stupendious Way. We have a story of *Zaleucus* King of *Locris*, that when his own Son was found to have transgressed a Law, that threatened the loss of both Eyes to the Offendor, the King resolves to execute the Law, to save that from Contempt; and yet withal to shew Mercy and Kindness to his Son, and that by this means, he consented to have one of his own Eyes put out to save one of his Sons Eyes; now will not all acknowledge that herein he shewed his Love to his Son, more than if he had freely remitted the whole Penalty. Why, thus it is here, God hath shewed his Grace and Love to us much more in giving his Son, and saving of us through his Satisfaction, than if he had

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done it as a meer *Act* of Dominion and Favour. So much in Answer to the first Objection.

*Obj.* 2. How is Salvation by Grace, since it is only by or through Faith, and not without it ; since such a Condition, Disposition or Qualification is necessary to our actual receiving or *partaking* of it.

*Ans.* 1. Grace and Faith are not inconsistent, not opposite or contrary one to another, so that it may be, and is, nevertheless of Grace, though it be only through Faith and not without it ; for, Faith, is no procuring, meriting, or deserving Cause of Salvation, only a necessary Disposition to our receiving of it ; *viz.* that which makes us duely qualified and disposed Subjects ; as the Sun Communicates its Light freely, but the Window-shuts must be removed before it can enlighten our House and Dwelling ; and as the taking away of the Window-shuts is no Cause of the Suns-light, only it removes that which did hinder its shining into our House ; so it is in this Case, Faith is but like the unstopping of the Window, the removing that which did hinder the healing and saving Beams of Grace from shining into our Souls.



2. Faith as to the most vital and essential Act of it ( which is the Consent or Choice of the Heart and Will ) is but a hearty, thankful Acceptance of the Gift of Grace, according to its proper Nature and Use ; for when you do heartily and sincerely Consent to take Christ, for all the ends and uses that he is offered to you for, in the Gospel, then are you Believers indeed, and Christ and Salvation is yours in Right and Title ; when you thankfully accept of Christ to save you from Sin, as well as from the evil Consequents and Miseries that follow it, then Christ is yours, and Salvation is yours in Title ; now I hope a Gift is nevertheless free, though it be given to none but those that are willing to receive it, yea and to those only that will heartily and thankfully receive it. If the King Pardon a Traytor on Condition that he will thankfully Accept it, and Promise to Rebel no more, but become a Loyal Subject, I hope he Pardons freely though upon such a Condition ; if you give any thing to the Poor on this Condition, that they reach forth their Hand to receive what you give, and be thankful to you for it, would you not reckon that you give freely ? and

nevertheless freely, though you require ~~that they~~ should thankfully receive your Alms: Why, thus is our Salvation of Grace, though it be only through Faith and not without it, for Faith is but our hearty, thankful, receiving of the Gift according to its Nature and Use.

*Obj.* But it may possibly be objected against this, that many carnal and ungodly Men would gladly accept of Salvation, and yet they are not therefore saved, nor have any Right or Title to it.

*Ans.* Take notice, that I say, that Faith is but a hearty, thankful, accepting of the Gift according to its proper Nature and Use? and is any carnal and ungodly Man, while such, heartily willing and desirous to accept it so? No, he is not, nor can he be, while he remains carnal and ungodly; But you will say, He is willing to accept of Salvation: Yea, no doubt, but what sort of Salvation? Not the Salvation of the Gospel; not that Salvation that is Purchased and Offered by Christ. At most, he desires only a part, but not the whole of it; he would be saved from Hell, but he would not be saved from Sin; he abhors and loaths that part of Salvation, as much as he doth wish for, and desire the other. No doubt, there  
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are none but would be saved from the ~~Miseries~~ of the Damned, from Everlasting Burnings, and Chains of Darkneſs ; but there are Thousands that would not be ſaved from their vain, carnal, earthly, ſenſual, and ſelfiſh Diſpoſition of Mind and Heart. Alas ! All that we can do, we cannot perſwade Men to this, we cannot by all manner of Arguments and Intreaties, prevail with Men to be willing to be ſaved from theſe : And Salvation from theſe and ſuch like evil and carnal Diſpoſitions, is a great and Principal Part of the *Salvation of the Goſpel*.

Again, There are many that are willing to accept of Chriſt ; but how ? Not wholly and intirely, as he is offered in the Goſpel ; they would have him to Pardon them, but not to rule over them ; they would have him to ſave them from the Guilt of Sin, and the Curſe for Sin ; but not from the Power and Dominion of it : They would, with all their hearts, have him to make them happy, but not to make them holy, not to conform them to the Image of God ; No, in this reſpect they hate him, as much as they deſire him in other reſpects ; they would have Chriſt to be to them a Hiding Place from the Wind, a Refuge and Shelter from the

Storms of Wrath, but they would not have him as a Physician to heal their diseased Souls of their inordinate love of Self and the World, and Creature-comforts, of their Sensuality, and Selfishness.

Thus when it comes to be examined, it will be found, that there is not a carnal Man in the World that is truly willing and desirous of Salvation, in the true and full sense of it.

3. *Faith it self is the Gift of God*, though it be but a hearty thankful acceptance of the Gift, according to it's proper Nature and Use, yet such is the Pravity and Corruption of our Nature, such is the Carnality, Earthliness, Sensuality of our Dispositions, naturally, that we should never consent to this, unless Gods special Grace did incline and perswade us to it. Did not God give us Faith we should never have it. All the Intreaties, Promises, Threatenings of the Gospel would never perswade our hearts to it without the special Grace of God; all the Arguments taken from God or our Selves, from Life and Death, Heaven and Hell, everlasting happiness or misery, would never prevail with the carnal, corrupt Heart of Man

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to believe, without the powerful, efficacious Grace of God: This is clear from many exprefs Testimonies of Scripture, the Text faith, *it is not of our selves; it is the Gift of God. Phil. 1. 29. unto you it is given ——— to beleive in him ———*

*Isa. 53. 1. Who hath believed our report; and then follows as a reason of it, to whom hath the Arm of the Lord been revealed.*

Now tho God give Salvation to none but Believers, yet since Faith it self is his Gift too, that makes it to be nevertheless of Grace still. Indeed was Faith a Disposition, acquired meerly by the power of Nature, or onely by our own Diligence and Industry in the Use of Means, without the Grace of God; then it would lessen the Glory of Grace indeed; and at best make it to be partly of Grace, and partly of our Selves. But it is not so; Faith that doth qualifie and dispose us for Salvation, is Gods Gift as well as Salvation it self; Grace gives all, both the Disposition to receive, and the consequent Benefit received too. But he always gives it in this wise, and holy Way and Order, that he makes one Gift to be the necessary Qualification to dispose the Soul for the receiving of another: He gives Repentance, to dispose the Soul

to receive Forgiveness of Sin ; gives Faith, to dispose the Soul to receive the great benefits of Justification and Adoption ; gives Holiness and Purity of Heart, to dispose the Soul for Communion with God and the everlasting Injoyment of him ; and he always observe this Order and Method, in bestowing the great and saving Gifts of his Grace, and never varies it. So that those shall never have the Gift of forgiveness of Sin, that have not first the Gift of Repentance ; and those shall never have the Gift of Salvation that have not first the Gift of Faith and Holiness.

*Obj.* 3. But if Salvation be by Grace though it be through Faith, ( which is but the hearty, thankful, acceptance of the Gift ) yet how is compleat Salvation, that is the Possession of Eternal Life and Glory of Grace ; when so much Care and Diligence and persevering Continuance in the Duties of Holiness and Obedience, is required in order to the Possession of it.

*Ans.* 1. It must be acknowledged, that the greatest Diligence and Seriousness in the Duties of Holiness and Obedience, and Continuance therein to our Lives end, are required to our compleat Salvation ;

tion ; yet this is not opposite to Grace, nor make Salvation to be ever the less of Grace.

That these are necessary, see what the Scripture saith, *Phil. 2. 12. Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling. Rom. 2. 7. To them who by patient continuance in well doing ——— Eternal Life. Heb. 12. 14. follow ——— and Holiness without which no Man shall see the Lord. 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10. And besides this giving all Diligence, add to your Faith, Ver- tue ———* It discovers great ignorance for any to call the Preaching of, and Pressing of Holiness and Obedience, as such, legal Preaching : For if so, never was greater legal Preachers heard then the Apostles *Peter and Paul*. Nay, if the meer pressing of such Duties be legal Preaching, then our Saviour himself was a legal Preacher too, *Luke 13. 24, 27. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. ——— Mat. 5. 16, 17, 19, 20. and Mat. 7. 24. He that hears these sayings of mine, and doth them——* And what Sayings were these? why, those excellent Precepts of Holiness and Obedience that he had Preached to them in his Sermon upon the Mount ; whence it is plain, *That it is not the pressing of the Duties of Holiness and Obedience that makes*  
*Preach-*

*Preaching to be Legal Preaching ; but it is the Ends and Uses that they are pressed for, that must denominate it : If they are pressed for Gospel-Ends and Uses, that is Gospel-Preaching ; and I see not how the Gospel can be truly Preached without the pressing of them in their place ; and if any do pretend to Preach the Gospel without it, they either Preach not Christ's Gospel, or but by the Halves ; but if any do press the Duties of Holiness and Obedience for Legal-ends and purposes, that is Legal Preaching indeed.*

But tho Holiness and sincere Obedience are necessary to Eternal Life and Salvation, yet it is nevertheless of Grace ; for whosoever sets *Grace* and Evangelical Holiness and Obedience, in opposition one to another, they set Christ, and his Word or Gospel against it self, and make it to speak Contradictions ; and they ignorantly lessen, and reproach and degrade that *Grace* which they would seem to exalt ; for Salvation is *never the less of Grace*, tho Holiness and Obedience are necessary, as the Means and Way to *attain* it ; which will thus appear.

1. Because *Evangelical Holiness and Obedience is it self a Gift of Grace*, even as Faith is ; for Faith is the Root and Principle



ciple of all true Obedience ; and all Holiness and Obedience is the Natural and Necessary Fruits and Products of it : So that Holiness and Obedience are given virtually in the *Gift* of Faith it self ; when God gives a principle that necessarily produces such and such Effects ; he truly gives those Effects themselves in giving of the Principles ; as he that gives you a Tree that naturally and certainly will bear such Fruits, he gives you the Fruit in giving of you the Tree ; as in Creation God gave Man a Principle of Reason, which doth principally Difference him from brut Creatures ; why now in giving him this principle of Reason he gave all the following Acts of Reason, whereby a Man Acts in a higher and more excellent way than the Bruits are capable of, why thus it is here.

2. But further, Grace doth not only give the Principle of Holiness and Obedience ; but Grace doth still continue to actuate the Principle, and concurs to the Production of every individual Act of Holiness and Obedience. Grace doth not turn us off to Trade with the Stock that is first given and bestowed upon us, but  
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it daily gives forth, and communicates renewed influxes to us ; there is an exciting quickening Grace, that stirs us up when we are dull, and rouses us up to a Holy Diligence and Fervour when we are Drowsie and Slothful ; and there is helping, aiding, or assisting Grace, given forth to every renewed Act of Obedience ; *Without me, saith Christ, you can do nothing ; And if you abide in me, as the Branch in the Vine, then you shall bring forth Fruit, but not else, John 15. Phil. 2. 13. — For it is God that Works in you both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure ;* hence it is most plain that Salvation is of Grace, notwithstanding such Care and Diligence in the Dutys of Holiness and Obedience be necessary in order to it : For you see that Evangelical Holiness and Obedience it self is of Grace.

3. Further still, the more Holy and Obedient any are, the more Grace do they receive from God, and the more they are beholden to Grace, and the greater Obligations they have to Praise and Admire the Riches of it towards them ; for the more Holy and Obedient any are, the more large and bountiful is Grace in its Gifts to them, 1 Cor. 15.

10. By

10. *By the Grace of God, I am what I am, and his Grace bestowed upon me, was not in vain, for I laboured more abundantly than they all* — and to this Purpose, we have a saying of St. *Augustine*, the more any one doth, the more Holy and Obedient he is, the more is he a Debtor to the Grace of God. Mr. *Rutherford* in his Book of the *Covenant of Grace*, p. 198. Speaking of the difference betwixt Gospel Obedience, and that of *Adam* in Innocency; saith, in Gospel Obedience, we offer more of the Lords own, and less of our own, because he both Commands, and gives us Grace to obey. You may hence see, what strange Preachers of Grace they are (if such there be, as is said) that set it in Opposition to Evangelical Holiness, and Obedience. For, alas! they do (unwittingly no doubt) lessen Grace and deny many of its greatest Gifts, and strip it of a principal Part of its Glory, while they think they do exalt it. This whole Matter may be illustrated by a Similitude or two. Suppose a Nobleman takes a Beggar from the Dunghil, designing to make him his Heir; or to give him an Estate of many hundreds or thousands *per Annum*; but before he will bestow it upon him, he will

will make him an accomplished Man, fit to be useful and serviceable in his Countrey, or else he will not give it him; and in Order hereunto, he is at a great deal of Pains, and Care, and Charge, in educating of him, at the Schools, and at the University, and the Inns of Court; and when he is compleatly accomplisht, he gives his Honour and Estate to him; now doth this make his Gift to be ever the less, or the less free, because he gave him the former Gift of his Education, and made that a Condition of his receiving the other? Will not all Men acknowledge, that his Bounty, was so far from being the less, that it was really the greater for it: That the Gift of his Education, did much the more inhanche his Bounty and Kindness to him, than if he had given him his Estate alone without it; and that he was much the more obliged and beholden to him, in that he gave him not only his Estate, but his Education too.

Why, really this is our Case, should God give us Heaven, without Holiness (was that possible) his Grace would be unspeakably less to us than it is; in first making of us Holy and Obedient, that we may thereby be made fit and meet to enjoy it.

Again,

Again, suppose a Coundemned Traytor, that is likewise Sick of a Mortal Disease, that if he Dye not by the Hand of Justice, he is sure quickly to Dye of his Disease; now is it not a far greater Grace and Favour of the King, to procure him a Physician and Pay for his Cure, and to Pardon his Crime too; than it would be only to Pardon his Crime and leave him to Dye of his Disease? Why, this is our very Case, we are Diseased as well as Condemned Sinners; and were our Crimes pardoned, and our Diseases not cured we should be miserable still, but the rich, free, and abundant Grace of God, doth not only Pardon our Crimes, but heals our Diseases too, by making of us Holy and obedient.

### USE of Information.

1. If it be so, that it is *by Grace that we are saved*; then this is directly against the Doctrine of the Merit of our good Works, for Grace and Debt are directly opposed by the Apostle as inconsistent, *Rom. 4. 4.* and *Rom. 11. 6.* Grace doth not destroy our Obligation to Works of Holiness and Obedience but increases it, and lays greater Obligations upon us than ever;

ever; but it quite overthrows the Merit and Desert of them; or their being any way procuring, and deserving Causes of Salvation; Grace obliges more strongly than ever, to the greatest Diligence, Industry and Endeavour in the Practise of them; but when we have done all that we are able, we must renounce all in Point of Desert, and say, *we are unprofitable Servants.*

2. If Salvation be of Grace, then this likewise overthrows that Doctrine of the Power of Nature or Free-will; as being sufficient and able of it self for Conversion without the Grace of God; for these two are inconsistent, that it should be of Grace, and yet that the Power of Nature should be sufficient, without Grace, and therefore the other must be false. *It is not of him, that wills nor of him that runs, but of God that shews Mercy; And who made thee to differ from another, or what hast thou that thou hast not received? 1 Cor. 4. 7. and Phil. 2. 13. Its God that Works in you both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure.*

2. But let us come to some Use of this Doctrine that may be more for our  
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Practice; Of you that have heard this Doctrine, that *The Salvation of Sinners is of Grace*, I reckon there are these two sorts of you. Some that have had as yet no Experience of the saving Effects of this Grace in your selves; and others of you that have had Experience of it. Now let us consider, what Direction and Instruction this Doctrine of Gods Grace may afford to both these sorts; to the one sort, in Order to their getting into a State of Grace and Salvation; and to the other sort, in Order to their furtherance and increase in Grace and Holiness and Comfort; there is much in it for the Instruction and Help of both sorts, if God give you but Wisdom and Skill, and Hearts to draw it out. But I would first say something to both in general; and then shew what Instruction there is in it to both more particularly.

1. In general, let me Caution all Persons whatsoever to take special heed, that they do not wrest and abuse this Doctrine of the Grace of God; we have great need of this Caution, because of that marvellous Proneness, that there is in all Men to it. Partly through the ignorance and weakness of our Understanding; and

especially through the carnal, selfish, and corrupt Disposition of our Hearts;  
1. Most Mens Understandings are so weak, that they think those things to be opposite or inconsistent that are not so, but are subordinate; as Gods Grace and Mans Duty; and his Care and Diligence in the use of Means; and all our Natures are so corrupt, that we are apt to turn the most precious Doctrine of Grace into Poyson to our Souls; as the Spider sucks Venome out of the most sweet and wholesome Plants and Flowers that be. The Apostle knew very well, how prone Men are to wrest and abuse the Grace of God; and therefore, when he had been discoursing largely of the riches and freeness of it in the former Chapters, he subjoyns a Caution against the abusing of it, *Rom. 6. 1. What shall we say then, shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid.* And *Jude 4.* We are told that many did turn the Grace of God into *Lasciviousness*; therefore when ever this Doctrine of Gods Grace is Preached, all have need to be Cautioned against the abuse of it. And for a Caution against it, consider these two Things. *First,* To wrest and abuse Grace is of all Sins the most provoking to God. *Secondly,* And the



the most Dangerous and Pernicious to Mens Souls.

1. The Abuse of Grace is of all Sins the most provoking to God, as we say, *Corruptio optimi est pessima*, the abuse of the best Things is of all other the worst, and doth most heighten and aggravate the Sin and Guilt of those that do so. If it be so hainous a Sin to abuse the Mercies of Gods common Providence, such as his Benignity, Patience and Long-suffering; so as thereby to be more bold and fearless in sinning against him, when they should be led thereby to Repentance and Thankfulness; as it is *Rom. 2. 4, 5*. Then how much more hainous, and crimson-dyed a Sin must it needs be, to wrest and abuse his Grace that brings Salvation, that offers Salvation, that tends to Salvation, that aims at and designs our Salvation, that is the first moving and efficient Cause of Salvation to us: What can be imagined worse than for Men to be evil, and the more evil because God is good to them! It is a Sin to return evil for evil to Men; and what is it then to return evil to God for the greatest good of all? There is nothing so provoking to a Man, as to have his free Love and Kindness abused and turned against himself, or to an

end quite contrary to what he designed it, and so it must needs be to God ; to abuse his *Grace* seems to be a greater Sin than to distrust his Power, or to slight his Authority, or to trample upon his Laws ; *you only have I known of all the families of the Earth, therefore I will punish you for your Iniquities.*

2. To abuse Grace is of all others the most pernicious and destructive to Mens Souls ; for this closes up the *Fountain* of all our *Blessings*, this makes *Grace* it self a Mans Enemy ; and then who or what shall Plead for him ; and Justice will not fail to *avenge the quarrel of abused Grace*, nay *Grace it self* will complain of the Wrong, and sollicite for Vengeance upon the Abusers of it. If the *only thing* that can recover the Sinner, be abused, so that he falls the *lower* thereby, that will be an irrecoverable fall indeed ; If a Man make *Mercy* and *Grace* it self his Enemy, then *who* or *what* shall be his Friend ?

But how or wherein is Grace abused ?

1. The Doctrine of Grace is notoriously abused, when Men from hence do think that they are exempted or discharged from the Law, as a Rule to govern their Hearts and Practices by ; this abuse may arise from a misunderstanding of that passage of the Apostle *Rom. 6. 14. Ye are not under the Law but under Grace.* As if Grace, and the Law,

was in all respects, opposed to one another, because they are in some; as if because God doth acquit a Believer from the condemnation of the Law, therefore we are discharged from all Obedience to it. Our corrupt Hearts are very ready to imbrace such Doctrines of *Libertinisme* and *Licentiousness*, as the Apostle shews by adding in the very next Words, *v. 15. What then shall we sin, because we are not under the Law, but under Grace? God forbid.* It is very pleasing to our carnal fleshly part to hear that Grace doth discharge us from all Obligation to the Law; that it hath no directing, regulating Power over a Believer. But this is a gross abuse of Grace; for when the Apostle saith *that we are not under the Law*; it is true in several Sences, but it is manifestly false in this Sence, that we are under no obligation by it as a *rule of life*. The true sence how we are not under the *law* is this.

1. We, that is Believers, are not under the condemning Power of the Law; but are by Grace freed from the Curse and Condemnation of it, 2. We are not under the Law as a Covenant of *life and salvation*: We are not under the Law as to the *rigid exaction of perfect, sinless obedience, as the only Term or Condition of Salvation*. No, though perfect Obedience is still a Duty;

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yet through Christ and for his sake, sincere Obedience is accepted.

But now, *because we are not under the Law*, in these respects it doth by no means follow that we are not under it as a Rule, or because it hath no condemning Power, that therefore it hath no regulating Power, over us; you shall see, that this Apostle, that saith, *we are not under the Law*, yet saith, that in other respects, *He is under the Law*. 1 Cor. 9. 21. *Being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ* not *ἀνομος* but *ἐννομος*; and the Apostle James saith, *If any break the Law in one point, he is guilty of all*, Jam. 2. which plainely shews that all are under the Moral Law as a Rule of Life, nay this Apostle when he had said *We are not under the Law, but under Grace*; the very next words shew, that he means it in a restrained Sence; and that he did not mean that we are from under the Law as a Rule of Duty, Rom. 6. 15. *What then, saith he, shall we Sin because we are not under the Law, but under Grace? God forbid*; as if he should say, you must not so understand it, as if we were discharged from all Obligation of Duty by the Law; for if so, the Caution had been needles, for *where there is no Law there is no Transgression*.

Again,

Again, to say that we are not under the Law as a Rule of Duty, is an high abuse of Grace, because this is contrary to, nay, doth destroy the essential relation of the Creature, as a Creature, to God; for our State and Condition as Creatures, is necessarily a State of Subjection to God; God is essentially related to us as our Governour, and we to him as his Subjects; but he is no Governour, if he have no Law to govern us by; nay, he hath no Creature, no not the highest Angels, that are under no law. The Angels, they have many Immunities and Priviledges above us, yet they are not exempt from Duty, or from a Law. *Psalm 103.20. — Ye his Angels that do his Commandments hearkening to the voice of his Word.*

2. Grace is abused when it is pretended to the excluding of a cautious fear of sinning, or an awful reverential fear of the Divine Majesty. This abuse may arise from a misunderstanding that Scripture 1 *John. 4. 18. there is no fear in love, for perfect love casts out fear*, which the Apostle plainly means of a servile slavish Fear; a distracting, tormenting, dispairing Fear; but not of an awful Fear of God; nor of a cautious Fear of offending him,

as is manifest by a multitude of other Scriptures both in the Old and New Testament. For though we have, through Grace, *freedom and boldness of access to God*, yet it is still with reverence, and godly Fear. Nay, the more Grace, the greater Reverence of God, and the greater Fear of sinning against him? *Heb. 11.28. let us have grace ——— Psalm. 130. 4. there is mercy with thee that thou mayst be feared, Hos. 3. 5. they shall fear the Lord and his goodness*, which is a Prophecie of Gospel times; the Grace and Goodness of God, is so far from making men presumptuous, that it is greater matter of reverence, and holy trembling; nay, this fear of reverence is so far from being abolished by the Gospel, that it continues even in Heaven amongst the Angels and blessed Spirits, it being an essential and necessary respect of the Creature as such, to his Creator.

3. Grace is abused when it is pleaded to make Repentance and Sorrow for Sin needless, as if Humiliation and sorrow for sin was a *legal duty*; whereas Repentance and all the acts of it are purely Gospel. For the Law knows no such thing; it neither did require it, as a means of Pardon and Life, nor admits it; and the

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Apostle speaks of it as a Duty, especially appropriated to the Gospel; and more evidently known and discerned to be a Duty, and to be practised, as the Gospel-light shone clearer and brighter, *Acts* 17. 30. *But now*—— now since the Preaching of the Gospel, in a special manner, *he commands all men every where to repent.* Nay, the most genuine Repentance and Sorrow arises from a sense of the Love and Mercy of God in Christ, *Zachary*, 12. 10.

4. *Grace is abused,* When thereupon Men take encouragement to be more careless and remiss in Duty; more slight and negligent in the use of God's Ordinances, and all appointed Means in order to Salvation: When, because we are saved by Grace, Men thence conclude, that their Care and Diligence in Praying, Hearing, Seeking, and Waiting upon G O D in the use of his appointed Means of Salvation, is vain, and to little purpose. This is a most horrid abuse of Grace, when it is used to make void God's own Ordinances and Institutions; and to teach and imbolden Men to slight and neglect them.

For

For wherefore did G O D institute the Ordinances of Worship, and command all a diligent Attendance upon him, in the Duties of Hearing, Reading, Praying, and such like, if He did not intend that his *Grace* should be communicated this way to Sinners, and ordinarily, not without them: As he gives His *Grace* freely, so he appoints the Way and Means, in which he will communicate it, and that is in the serious and diligent use of His Own Ordinances, *Isa.* 55. 2, 3. *Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live.* *Prov.* 1. 23. & 8. 34. *Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my Gates, waiting at the Posts of my Doors.* G O D will be met with in his own way; and ordinarily he communicates his *Grace* according to our Diligence in the Use of Means; and to plead the efficacy of *Grace* for the slackening and abating our Diligence in the Use of Means, is to turn God's *Grace* against himself, against his own Honour and Worship; and the making void his own Institutions, as vain and needless things.

5. But *Grace is worse abused still*, When, because our *Salvation is of Grace*, Men therefore think that there is nothing at all for them to do, no Duty incumbent upon them, for the putting themselves in the way of it; no obligation to make use of their natural Faculties, with such external Means of Salvation as God affords them, in order to the obtaining *Salvation*; this is such an abuse, that in effect, it discharges a Carnal Man of his obligations to his Maker, and strips God of his Authority and Dominion over his Creatures; and denies all that Duty and Homage that the Rational Creature, as such, do owe to God; for if Man have no Duty that he ought, and is bound to do, then it will follow, either that God hath no Right to command him any; or at least, that he hath appointed him no Duty wherein he should endeavour the glorifying of God, and the Salvation of his own Soul; and if so, then God doth not Govern him according to his Nature. It is a very great abuse of *Grace*, to plead it to the lessening of our Duty, but much more when it is pleaded for the utter abolishing of it; and sure all Men must needs see the absurdity of this, that a  
Man

Man should be obliged in point of Duty, to use his Rational Faculties in the lower Affairs of the World, and to act like a Man in buying and selling, and all the Concernments of the Bodily Life, and yet be under no obligation to use his thinking, reasoning, reflecting, considering Power in that which is the great and main end of his Being, the glorifying of God, and the saving of his own Soul.

Now, that all these fore-mentioned, and such like, are gross abuses of the Grace of God, will be further manifest, from this one Consideration, That *Grace* doth not discharge us from, no, nor lessen any obligation to Duty and Obedience to God, that Man was under before; but instead of that, it lays us under greater obligations than ever; for it superinduces or superadds this very great obligation to love, fear, serve, honour and obey God, to all the rest that we were under before: GOD is essentially related to us, as our Maker, Owner, Ruler and Benefactor; and the obligations that arise from hence, are unalterable, can never cease or be lessened; (though some positive *Duties* may be changed or abolished, as God pleases.) *Grace* doth discharge no Man from any obligation that

that these relations and benefits lays him under ; but it superadds one more to all the rest, which in some sence is greater than all the rest, and that is a free and gracious Redemption, and recovery from a self-procured Misery and Ruine ; now there cannot be a greater absurdity, nor wickedness sure, than for Men to imagine, and plead that their obligations to Duty are less, when they are manifestly greater than before ; that the addition of a greater Benefit should make void or lessen our former obligations ; which is as wise and as just reasoning, as if a Man should say, That the casting of more weight into the Scale, doth make that, and all that was in before, to stand for nothing ; as if *Absolon*, when he Rebelled against *David*, should plead, That his free favour in pardoning him the Murder of his Brother *Amnon*, did discharge him from his obligations that he was under to *David*, as he was his natural Father, a loving and indulgent Father, and his rightful Ruler and Sovereign.

*Third Use.* If it be by Grace that we are saved, then let us see what direction and instruction this Doctrine affords to those

those that are yet in a graceless State, in order to their getting into it.

1. You that have yet had no experience of the saving fruits and effects of this Grace in your selves; labour to be sensible of, and affected with the sadness of your Case. Is it not a sad Case, that of the Showers of Grace that fall so plentifully in the dispensation of the Gospel, that none hath yet dropt into your Souls? That you should be like *Gideon's Fleece*, wholly dry, when the Ground round about you is moistened, and refreshed with the Dews of Heaven; that many are saved, while you are yet in your sins; many that sit under the same Ministry, hear the same Sermons, are made partakers of *those things that accompany Salvation*, while you have felt no such Influences and Operations by the same Word. I am confident you would think it a sad Case, if the Meat and Drink which nourishes and refreshes others, should neither nourish nor refresh you at all, but you should starve and pine away, and die for want of nourishment in the midst of Plenty: But it is a much more sad Case, if that Word that is through Grace effectual to the Salvation of others, hath no such effects

effects upon you; that many round about you, *are of darkness made light in the Lord*, while you are in darkness still, though in the midst of light; that while others are reconciled to God, and brought nigh to him; you that enjoy the same Word and Means of Grace, are as far off from God as ever, and still in your Enmity against him.

O! Labour to get your hearts deeply affected with the sadness of your Case, and this would be a good step towards the mending and bettering of it. Methinks, your own thoughts should suggest to you many things that might make you groan and lament the sadness of your Case, while you are utter strangers to the *saving effects* of Grace.

2. If it be by Grace that we are saved, then consider, that your Case, though it be sad, yet it is not hopeless and remediless; though it be dangerous, it is not yet altogether desperate: Think thus with your selves, if all that are saved are saved by Grace, then why may not I hope that it may, one time or other, cast its Skirt over my nakedness, and shed its benign influence over my soul; since  
Grace

Grace saves all that are saved, it saves freely, and none for any Merit or Desert in them, none for any worth or worthiness that it sees in them more than in others; think with your selves, *Grace* hath saved Thousands and Millions of Sinners that were as bad as I, as great sinners, and as old sinners as I; that had as much neglected and slighted, and sinned against it, and abused it as I have done. Why, as it is really a humbling and affecting Consideration, to see many and many saved, while you are yet in your sins; so there is really, in this very thing some ground of hope and encouragement too: Is it not some ground of Hope to think that such and such were dead to sin as I am, but at last were *made alive*; were in a lost State and Condition, but at last were found by Grace; they were sometimes carnal, worldly and disobedient, (as I am) but at last, Grace did renew and change them; and therefore I will wait and hope that Grace may sometime shed its benign influences upon me.

3. If it be by Grace that we are saved, then you hence see where it is that you are to seek for *Salvation*; You see you must go to GOD for it, and cry to him,



him, and pray and beg of him for it. Whoever is saved, it is the Gift of God to them, and a Gift of his Free Grace and Favour, yet not so as to exclude our seeking or begging of it; nay, it so much the more strongly obliges and engages us to seek it, and pray to him for it. When *G O D* promises *Israel*, that he would *give them a new heart*, yet, saith he, *for all this will I be enquired of, by the House of Israel to do it for them*, Ezek. 36. 37. and our Saviour saith, *ask and ye shall have, seek and ye shall find*, and though Grace gives all freely, yet it will be sought unto, and inquired after, and as it is elsewhere, *ask of me, and I will give thee*; so God will have his Grace asked, intreated and sought for; now, have you not either neglected this crying unto God, and intreating of his Grace? or else have you not done it in a careless, slighty and customary manner? You have, it may be, used other Means, such as Reading and Hearing the Word, but have you not neglected to Pray, and cry unto God for his Grace to bless it, and make it effectual to you? Saving Benefits are principally to be obtained upon your Knees, in earnest Prayers and Crys to the *G O D* of all Grace.

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Oh ! That you would try this Course, every day to sollicite the Throne of *Grace*, and never give over your Suit till God give you an *Answer of Peace* ; If you want necessary Food for your Bodies, and can no otherwise get it, you will ask it of those that have it to give ; yea, and will not easily take a Denial for such things ; and should you not much more ask of God saving Grace for your Souls, for he only hath it to bestow upon you.

4. If it be by Grace that we are saved, then as this directs you where to seek it, even of *the God of all Grace* ; so it directs what is your chief Argument and Plea that you must make use of with him, *viz.* his own rich *Mercy* and *Free Grace* ; you must beg of God Mercy for Mercies sake, and Grace for Grace's sake : This is the Principal Argument that Sinners have to plead with *G O D*, His own *Grace* and *Mercy* : but this contains many Arguments under it, all which are ultimately and reductively a pleading of *Grace*.

And as I do here put all Graceless Persons upon praying and crying to God for his *Grace*, as their undoubted Duty, and as a Means appointed by *G O D*, in order

order to their obtaining of *Grace*; so I will shew you what Arguments all may use, yea, and ought to use with God in seeking his *saving Grace*.

1. You may plead with God, That you are his Creatures, he made you, his Power gave you these Beings that you have. This is a good Argument, or else we should never find it so often made use of in Scripture. When we cannot plead a special Interest and Relation to him, as our reconciled God and Father in Christ, yet we may plead our general Relation to him as his Creatures, and he our Maker; thus Job 10. 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress, that thou shouldst despise the work of thy hands?* And ver. 8. *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me,* and Ps. 119. 73. *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me, give me understanding that I may learn thy Commandments.* Job 14. 15. *Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee, thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.* Isa. 64. 9. *But now O Lord—— We are the Clay, and thou art the Potter, we are all the work of thy hands, be not wroth, very sore, &c.* though it be no good Argument with Men, to ask one gift because they have given us

another, yet it is with God. Go to him and say, *behold Lord, I am thy Creature, thy Power hath made me, and thy Grace only can now make me, destroy not the work of thy own Hands &c.*

2. You may plead the end of your Creation, which was that you might serve him your Maker in a pleasing and acceptable manner; go to him then and plead this; Can you not say, Lord thou hast shewed me, that the very end of my Being is that I might please and serve thee which in this corrupt and depraved state I am in, I can never do, without thy renewing and sanctifying Grace. O, that as thou hast magnified thy Power in making of me out of nothing; so let thy Grace be magnified in recovering a lost and undone Creature, in reconciling an apostate Creature to thy self; deny not the help of thy *Grace* to recover a depraved, corrupted Creature, that would fain answer the end of his Being, that would fain be capable of that Work and Service thou madest him for. Lord I would fain fill up the place in thy Creation that thou hast set me in, and not be an unprofitable Drone or a useless Burden in it.

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3. You may plead your own Misery, as *Psf. 79. 8. Let thy tender Mercy prevent us, for we are brought very low.* While Persons are under the Means of Grace and Salvation, Misery is a good Argument to plead with a gracious and merciful God; plead then your Misery with God: say, Lord, I am a lost Creature, an undone Creature, laden with Guilt and Sin, and like to be lost and undone for ever, if thy Mercy pity not, if thy Grace do not help and save me in time; my Misery is such, that none can help or save me but thou; and if thou save not I must perish for ever. Say, tho as I am an Apostate sinner, I am a most deserving object of thy Wrath, yet as I am a miserable lost creature, here is a fit object for thee to glorifie thy Grace and Mercy upon. Will it not be the Glory of thy Mercy to Pity and Help the miserable? and will it not be the Glory of thy Grace to save such as deserve thy Wrath?

4. You may plead your own weakness and inability to help or save your selves; that you can do nothing without him; nothing that will be to any purpose, or that will be of any avail to Salvation,

without his special Grace. Say, *Lord I have destroyed my self, I confess: but in thy Grace alone, is all my Hope and Help; thou knowest, that I have such an hard Heart that none but thou can soften; such an Iron Sinew in my Will that none but thou can bend; such a carnal, corrupt, earthly Temper, and Disposition, that none but thou can renew and change it.* O, let thy Mercy Pity, and thy own Grace move thee to help a miserable lost Creature, that has no help in himself or in any other besides thee.

5. You may plead the very End and Design of Redemption; which was the Glory of his free Grace and Mercy, in the recovery and Salvation of miserable and lost Sinners. Say, Lord didst not thou contrive the Work of Redemption, and send thy Son into the World, and deliver him up to Death, for this very End and Design, that thy Grace, together with other of thy Perfections, might be glorious in pardoning, justifying sanctifying and saving of depraved, guilty, and lost Sinners. Now behold here a miserable lost Child of *Adam*, didst thou not send thy Son that thy Grace might be glorified in the Salvati-  
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on of such, and will not thy Grace be as glorious in saving of me, as of any other? O, be not Angry with the Prayer, stop not thine Ears against the cries of thy poor lost Creature, that begs but for such things, as are suitable and agreeable to thy own gracious Design. Thus you see what Arguments all may use with God.

5. If it be by *Grace that we are saved*, then if you would partake of it's saving Influences, this directs you to lye in the way of it; that is, exhibite the greatest Seriousness, Diligence, Earnestness in the Use of Gods appointed Means that possibly you can; for as Grace gives all freely, and chooses it's own Objects upon whom it will bestow it's Gifts: so it chooses and appoints it's own Way and Means, wherein and whereby it will communitate it's saving fruits and Effects to Men, and these are the Word and Ordinances, and Duties of Holiness and Worship. Hence the Gospel is called, *the Gospel of the Grace of God*; and the Ordinances of Worship are called, *the Means of Grace*; not only because, the Grace of God, is therein revealed and made known; but also because, it is

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thereby;

thereby, in the serious diligent and reverend Use of them, communicated and bestowed upon carnal, blind, and dead Sinners, for the inlightening, sanctifying and saving them; therefore here you must lie and wait for it, as the impotent Man did at the Pool of *Bethesda*, waiting for the Motion of the Waters: There was a healing Vertue communicated, but it was by those Waters and no others.

So Grace doth communicate it's healing, sanctifying, and saving Virtue; but it is by it's own chosen and appointed Means, and no other. As it is the influence and blessing of Heaven, that give us the Fruits of the Earth; but this only by blessing Mans Labour and Industry in Plowing and Sowing, and never without it, so it is here.

Carnal Hearts are apt to draw a quite contrary Conclusion from hence; and to say, if it be Grace that saves us, then we have the less, if any thing, to do our selves. But you see the contray Inference to this of theirs is clear *viz.* that we should not do the less our selves, but rather the more, because Grace saves us, as the Apostle saith, *Work out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling, for it*



is God that Works in you both to will and to do. A strange Inference! some would think, and yet it is very clear, as you may see in other things, the Husbandman, when the season fits him doth bestir himself the more, in plowing, and sowing, and gathering in the Fruits of the Earth; because he knows he hath not the Season in his own Power; and all his Labor and Industry without that, will signifie nothing at all; so here, if it be Grace that must save us, if ever we be saved: Then you have great Reason, to bestir your selves in using the Means wherein Grace communicates it self.

6. If Grace saves us, then as you must use the Means that are of it's appointing, so you must use then dependently; with an Eye to Grace for its Blessing upon them, to make them successful. Grace is too little eyed, too little sought unto, too little depended on in the Use of Means, and therefore the Success is for the most part accordingly. Persons in hearing the Word eye Men that are Instruments, but eye not God and his Grace which is the Life and Soul of all Ordinances. Persons eye Men and not God, depend more upon Mens Parts and

and Abilities, than upon Gods Grace and Blessing, and therefore they find in Ordinances, what a Man can do, and no more: And what is that? Why, a sound in their Ears, but no powerful Effects and Operations upon their Hearts; a little pleasing of the Fancy, with some light, superficial touches upon the Affections but no renewing, sanctifying Change of the Soul. But was Gods Grace more eyed, and more depended on, in the use of his Ordinances, we should doubtless see its saving Fruits and Effects, more plentifully, and more ordinarily communicated than now they are.

Men speak but to the Sences, it is God only that can speak to the Heart; Men may argue with the Will, but it is the Grace of God only, that can incline and perswade it; and therefore, as those that built the Wall of *Jerusalem*, wrought with the Trowel in one hand, and the Sword in the other; so you must, as it were, work in the diligent use of Gods appointed Means and Ordinances, with the one hand; and with the other lift up to Heaven, for his Grace to bless them to you: Thus if Grace saves us, then you must

must be sure to eye Grace, and depend upon it for Success in the use of Means.

7. If it be by Grace that we are saved, then here is great encouragement, against the difficulties that attend the Conversion and Salvation of a Sinner; the difficulties are great, both from the Malice and Power of Satan, the Opposition of an alluring and insnaring World, and especially from the carnal and corrupt Temper and Disposition of our own Hearts: all these together, do cast such Impediments and Rubs in our Way, that it were enough, utterly to discourage all Attempts and to make us to sit down in Despair, if we had no greater Power than our own to trust to, or depend upon; but here is your Encouragement, that it is Grace that saves us, and therefore those things that are Difficulties with us, are none with God; those things that are impossible to be overcome by your own Strength, are easily superable by an Almighty Grace. When our Saviour told his Disciples that it was *easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a Needle, than for a rich man to be saved*; they were amazed at it, and said, *who then can be saved?* why? saith our saviour *those things that*

*that are impossible with Men, are easie with God.*

Most Men, while they are in Ignorance and Carnal Security; Strangers to God and themselves too; they think it an easie thing to be saved, but when once their Eyes come to be opened, and their Consciences convinced of their dead, lost, and undone State; how dead their Hearts are to God and Holiness; how powerful Corruption is, and how weak and unable they are to conquer it, then they are ready to say, alas! who can be saved? Why, here is great incouragement for you, that though Conversion-work be above your own power, and the power of any meer Creature, yet Grace can enlighten your darkness, quicken your deadness and overcome your resistance.

As for instance, when the Soul considers its own earthly, carnal Temper and Disposition; how disinclined and averse it is to God and Holiness, and all Spiritual and Divine things; it is ready to say, how shall this heart of mine ever be made to love God above all, and to delight in Him and his Service? why, here is Incouragement, God that made the heart, can Master it; can renew and change it; he can of stones raise up Children  
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to *Abraham*; he can make *dry and dead bones live*, he can breath Life into a dead Soul; he can make a Temple for himself, of the most filthy and unclean Heart that is; he that made Heaven and Earth of nothing, can turn a heart of Stone into flesh; he can turn the most earthly, carnal, sensual temper that is, into a holy, heavenly Disposition; he can stamp his own Image and Likeness upon a slave of Sin and Satan.

Thus since it is by Grace that we are saved; then notwithstanding all Difficulties, here is great Incouragement to use his appointed Means; to pray, and wait, and strive in hopes of Success, and a good Issue; for were the difficulties more, and greater than they are, yet they are not insuperable to an Almighty Grace.

4. If it be by *Grace that we are saved*, than what use should those make of this Doctrine that have already tasted and experienced, the saving Fruits and Effects of Grace in themselves? it will afford much for their furtherance and increase in Grace and Holiness.

1. If we are *saved by Grace*; And have you experienced the saving Effects of it, in your Selves, then you have Reason to be humbled; Pride, self-conceitedness, and

and over-weaning Thoughts of our selves, is a thing most hateful in the Eyes of God, most contrary to his Nature, and his Law. God resists the Proud ; and he is said to know the Proud afar off. But Humility, is a thing of great Price and Value in his Eyes, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. *Yea the humble Spirit*, is a Habitation that he makes choice of, as a Seat of his special Residence: *Isa.* 57. 15. And therefore, God hath contrived, the whole business of our recovery and Salvation by Christ, in such a Way and Method, as shall most effectually hide Pride from Man ; Salvation is of Grace from first to last, that the loftiness of Men may be humbled, and the Lord alone exalted. It is true, if Gods Grace has taken hold on your Hearts, and begun a sanctifying, saving Work upon you ; if he hath begun to Form you after the Divine Image and likeness, he hath highly exalted you indeed ; he hath lifted you up from the Dunghil, and set you with Princes, yea higher than the Princes of the Earth in true Worth and Dignity. But yet, though God hath thus highly exalted you, there is no Reason or Cause in all this why you should exalt your selves, or be puffed up with high Thoughts or Con-  
ceits

ceits of your selves, for it is Grace that hath done all this for you, and not you your selves; it is Gods free Gift to you, and not any worth or desert. of yours. Therefore oft reflect upon the Apostles Question, *What hast thou that thou didst not receive?* 1 Cor.4.7. O! therefore walk humbly, be low in your own Eyes, and this will be pleasing in the sight of God. This will be to Answer the very Design of Grace in its great Gifts to you; this will make you more fit for Communion with God; this will make your Souls a Temple that he will Delight to dwell and walk in; and this will dispose you to receive more, and more Grace from him; *He resists the Proud, but gives Grace to the Humble.*

2. If it be so, that we are saved by Grace, then let Grace have the Glory of all that it hath wrought in you, and done for you. Gods own Glory is his great End and Design in all his Works; it is that which above all things else, he is most tender and Jealous of. He freely communicates his choicest and greatest Gifts to Men; but his Glory, he will give to none; that the reserves wholly and solely to himself; and the  
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Glory of his Grace is the great Aim and Design of his redeeming and recovering Work, *Eph. 1. 6. To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, &c.* Take heed then, that you do not rob Grace of any of its Glory.

We are very prone to ascribe to our selves, as it is said of the Atheist, tho' he doth not speak out with his Tongue, yet he saith in his Heart, *there is no God*; So though we speak not out, yet we are apt to have such Thoughts in our Hearts; as if God did see something more or better in us than in others, as if we were better disposed and prepared for Grace than others; or that we were more serious, diligent and industrious in the use of Means than others; or that God did foresee that we would bring more Glory to him than others; that we are prone to such self ascribing Thoughts, doth appear by that Caution that is given to *Israel*, *Deut. 9. 4. speak not in thine Heart saying — for my righteousness, the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land &c.* It is likely; before your Conversion, you was more serious, diligent and industrious in the use of Means than many others; but it was a more common Grace, that  
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made you so; that brought you to that: Grace gave you that first, in order to his bestowing of his more special, and excellent Gifts upon you. O! therefore see to it that you rub every fling of this Gold, off from your own Fingers; and let Grace have the Glory of all, that it has wrought in you; say, not I, but the Grace of God that was with me, and therefore not unto us, not unto us, but to thy Name be the Praise.

As the Moon shines not by its own, but a borrowed Light; so there is nothing excellent in you above others; no holy, heavenly Inclination or Disposition in you, but what is a Gift of Grace to you: Your breathing after God is an Effect of his breathing upon you first. Say then, with the Apostle 1 Cor. 15. 9. 10. *I am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church, but by the Grace of God, I am, what I am.* So say you, I was a carnal, dead Sinner, but by the Grace of God, I am alive; I was a lover of Pleasures more than a Lover of God; but by the Grace of God, my carnal, earthly Heart, is in some measure sanctified, and changed, and turned towards God, and Holiness, and Heaven. I was foolish

lish and disobedient, and slighted Christ, and his saving Benefits, as much as any others; but by the Grace of God my hard Heart is somewhat softened, my Stubborness and Resistance overcome, my Enmity taken away, my averfness to Christ, in some measure turned, into a desiring, loving, and seeking of him.

3. *Are we saved by Grace*; and hath Grace begun a saving Work upon you, then walk thankfully too. Every Benefit calls for thankfulness; and then much more, saving Benefits; which are the greatest of all others. Has Grace made you to differ from others that are still in the Gaul of Bitterness, and the Bond of Iniquity. Nay, has Grace made you to differ, so much from your Selves; from what you sometime were; and should you not be thankful for it? Has Grace brought you out of Darkness into a marvelous Light, brought you out of a state of Bondage, and Slavery to the Devil and Sin; into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God? Of Dead, has made you alive; of strangers, has made you nigh to God; of Enemies, hath reconciled you to him, and made you his adopted Children, of cursed, condemn-

ed ones, has brought you into a state of Pardon and Justification? Oh! what Reason have you to be thankful? Let your Tongues, and your Lives to, continually speak your thankfulness, for such, and so great Mercy. Say then with the Psalmist, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits, &c. Psalm 103.*  
1, 2, 3, 4.

And that you may be excited to Thankfulness, consider these Things.

1. Consider the greatness of this Mercy, of all the Mercies that God bestows upon the Children of Men, saving Mercies are the greatest, and the best; if Grace has saved you, or given you such Things as do accompany Salvation, that is more than all other Blessings laid together. Indeed all Gods Mercies are great, considering how undeserving we are of them; but saving Mercy, is like the Sun among the other Planets, that outshines all the rest, and darkens their Glory when it comes into view.

2. When Grace saves us, that is a greater Benefit than Creation it self; as the Redemption of the World by Christ,  
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is a greater Work, and doth discover more of the Wisdom, Power, Love, and goodness of God to Mankind, than the Creation of the World. And the making of any Soul, actually a Partaker of saving Benefits, is a greater Gift, than the giving of it a Being in Creation. Now consider, do you not think your selves greatly obliged to bless God for your Beings; that he made you something, that were nothing? That he made you Men and Women, and not Toads or Serpents? Surely, if you Love your selves, if you value your Lives and Beings; or any of your Creature-Comforts and Injoyments; Then you must needs bless God that made you what you are, out of nothing. Ah! but how much more, should you bless God, that of his special Grace and Love, hath translated you from Darknes to Light? from Death to Life; from Slavery to Liberty; from Wrath and Curses to Favour and Blessedness? for to be under these evils, was worse than to be nothing; and these Blessings are better, than meer natural Life and Being without them. Alas! What good would your Creation have done you, since the Fall, without sanctifying and saving Grace, it would  
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but make you capable of greater Misery. Better a thousand Times, never to have been Born, than to be a Vessel of Gods Wrath; and a Companion of Devils and damned Fiends in Everlasting Burnings.

2. When Grace saves you it doth unspeakably more for you than the bestowing of all the outward Blessings of this Life upon you; Health, Riches, Honour and Friends, with other Injoyments and Comforts of this Life, are great Mercies; but they are unspeakably short of renewing and saving Grace; you that have healthful, and comely Bodies, when you look upon any decriped, maimed, deformed, monstrous Persons, do you not admire the goodness of God that hath not made you such; but is it not worse to have blind, deformed, monstrous Souls, than to have such Bodies? and is it not a greater Mercy, to have your deformed Souls beautified and made comely with the Divine Image, than to have comely Bodies? The same may be said of Riches, and all other worldly Injoyments.

All external, and worldly Injoyments, are but for a while, and alas! How little

a while too? When you come to Dye, what becomes of bodily Strength, and Beauty? of worldly Honours, Riches, and Friends? Alas! when you are going into another World, if you look back upon these Things, you will see them all shrinking away from you; and leave you to go alone, as to any Comfort you are like to have of them. Of how short a continuance is the difference betwixt the Rich and the Poor; the honourable and the base, the healthful and sickly? But sanctifying and saving Grace, will stick by you when every Thing else will leave you; that is Beauty will never decay, that is Riches you can never loose; that is an Everlasting Foundation, upon which shall be built an immortal undecaying, never ending Glory and Happiness; saving Mercy is such as Death it self can not separate or divide you from.

3. Saving Mercy is unspeakable Mercy indeed, if you consider the greatness of the Misery it secures and delivers you from. It is impossible to know, how great a Mercy saving Grace is, unless you know what direful Misery all that are yet unfaved, are under and liable to; and alas! the Misery of those that are yet  
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yet unsaved, is such as no Tongue can express. For the present, they are hateful to God, have a fearful Load of Guilt upon their Souls; a numberless number of Sins upon the score, which must all be accounted for. And they are every Moment, in danger of dropping into the bottomless Gulf of Misery; alas! those that are yet altogether unsaved, are not sure to be one Day or Hour out of Everlasting Burnings; when they close their Eyes at Night, they are not sure, but they may open them in Hell flames; they are condemned already, there wants nothing but the executing stroak to make them extreamly and remedilessly miserable; why, this was once your Case, but saving Grace has now put you into a happier and securer State; and should not such a Mercy as this affect your Hearts, and excite you to thankfulness for it,

4. Saving Grace will appear to be a great Mercy indeed, if you consider how great Happiness it further disposes and prepares you for. And what is that? Why, for the Possession of Heaven, for the Society of Angels and blessed Spirits in Glory; yea, for Fellowship with God and Christ, and a perfect Everlasting In-

joyment of him, for the being ever with the Lord, and seeing of him Face to Face. And will you not be thankful for such a Mercy as this?

2. To excite you to Thankfulness, consider the freeness of this Grace that has saved you. What Motive or Inducement did Grace see in you more than in others, that it should pick you out as a Vessel of Mercy, while it hath left others, so many others, still under Wrath and the Curse? Why, it saw nothing more in you to move and incline its kindness, and Love towards you than in thousands of others, that are still left to ripen themselves for Destruction; no Reason can be given of Gods Love and Kindness to you more than to any others; but that *Rom. 9. I will have Mercy upon whom I will have Mercy*; and that which our Saviour saith, *Thou hast bid these Things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them to Babes*; and why, the only Reason is, because it so pleased thee; if such free Grace as this will not Provoke you to Thankfulness, what will? Look upon others, that are still in the Gall of Bitterness and Bond of Iniquity; that slight Christ and his Grace, that delight themselves in the high Road to Perdition, that



that sport themselves with Sin and Damnation ; that hear Sermons, but are little more moved with them than the Seats they sit on. And say, I was once as they are, and had been so to this Day, had not Grace been more kind and merciful to me than to them.

3. To excite your Thankfulness, consider what Pains and Patience Grace was at with you, before your carnal, backward, and perverse Hearts were prevailed with. How long did the Spirit of God strive with you in vain ! How oft did he go away grieved because you slighted and resisted his Holy Motions ! How long did Christ knock at the Door of your Hearts, before you would open to him ! How long did he follow you and woe you by the offers and Promises of his Word, and the Motions of his Spirit, before he could gain your Consent ! How often did you shut your Eyes against Light, and stifle Convictions, and quench the Beams of the Spirit ; and break one Band and Cord after another, that Grace had fastened upon your Consciences, like resolute Souldiers, that are beaten from one Fort, fly to another, and will never yield, till they have none left

left to fly to. Ay, did not you deal thus with God? Did not Grace meet with all this and more Resistance from you, in turning your perverse Hearts from Creatures to God, from Sin to Holiness, and from Self to Christ? And yet Grace bore all patiently at your Hands, and continued to follow you still, and would never leave you, till it had overcome your Resistance and Opposition, and with an Almighty Arm pluckt you as a Brand out of the Burning. O, how free and rich was Gods Grace toward you, that would not leave you, notwithstanding your long and obstinate Resistance, and striving against it: That would not suffer you to be miserable, when you your self was so loath and backward to be saved.

4. Consider, saving Mercy is vouchsafed but to a very few comparatively; alas! But to few of those, that injoy the Means of Grace and Salvation; nay, many that have had the very same Means, and heard the very same Sermons that you have done, and yet the Spirit of Life from God hath quickened you, while those that sat by you remain dry and dead Bones still: Nay, that very Sermon

mon that Grace made effectual to quicken and save you; others were no more moved with it, than the Earth they trod upon.

So much for the Third Inference, walk Thankfully.

4. If you are saved by Grace, then Walk fruitfully; let it be your Care and Endeavour to Honour Grace in your Lives and Conversations; *Paul* when he had said, *By the Grace of God, I am what I am*; he presently adds, *And his Grace bestowed upon me was not vain, for I laboured more abundantly than they all*, 1 Cor. 15.

10. Thus, do you labour to Honour Grace, by the Holiness, Purity, and Heavenliness of your Lives and Conversations; let it be seen, by your whole Practice, by your Converse and Dealing with all Men, what a great, what a wonderful, what an excellent Change Grace has made in you? Alas! you will greatly dishonour Grace, if you profess to be partakers of it, and yet appear to be no better Men than you were before.

And Honour the Gospel, that is the Channel in which Grace doth run by esteeming and loving of it; and in your Place by encouraging the Preaching of it,  
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and Sinners Attendance upon it all you can; invite others to those Waters where you have found healing for your own Souls.

5. And *Lastly*, If you are saved by Grace, then continue in a close Attendance upon Grace, and a diligent waiting for its further Influences, in the use of its appointed Means for the completing of the Work that it has begun upon you.

You are yet but begun to be saved, there is a great deal more to be done upon you before the Work be compleated. Most of you are yet got but a little way out of *Egypt*, and have many Stages to go before you come to the Land of Promise. And Grace hath not yet put its last Hand to the greatest Saint, that is yet on this side Heaven; therefore let all continue seeking, and waiting diligently for its further Influences in his own appointed Way; Till he that has begun a good Work in you, has finished and compleated it according to his own Promise, Phil. 1. 6.

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